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MILITARY Miniatures IN REVIEW

Euro gold!

Sherman III ARV I:
The old world meets the new and a conversion is born!

A 6 Tonner from the Past:
Building a P.S.P. all resin Corbitt 666 Truck

Swedish meatballs:
A sexy Nordic duo from Trumpeter

Like shooting Frogs in a barrel:
Master Productions 40mm Bofors Air Defense Truck

Hey, I think... I see the Tiger book!

Waffen SS, Kursk 1943:
A sneak peek at the next installment in the RZM Archive series

A Chinese rocket's "Red" glare:
The Type 89 MRL

Oh no, not another Kübel!
A CMP –15 cwt Kübel

Okinawa '45:
The LVT(A)4 conversion

MMiR: helping you maintain the maturity level of a 12 year-old!

The model that ate Detroit!

DML's large and in charge Karl Mörser in 1/35th scale

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No. 33

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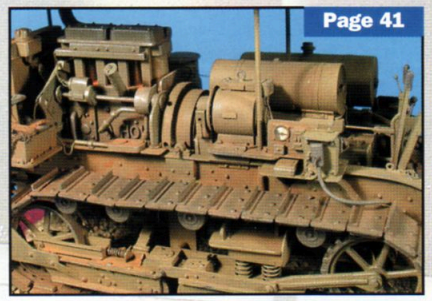
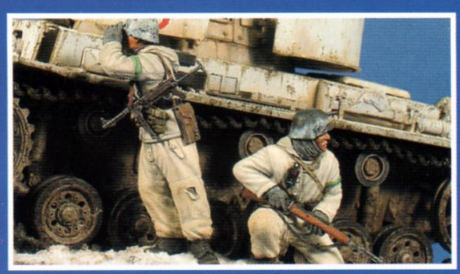
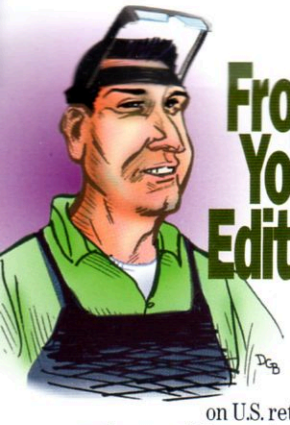


ON THE COVER:

Bring home the gold! If you are a fan of *Armour Modelling* from Japan, you'll recognize Masahiro Doi's nifty little Panzer III diorama. This is a previous Gold Medal winner at Euro and it was on display at the 2002 show. Most of the Gold Medal winners in armor and a few in WW2 figures can be seen starting on page 41. Just about edging the dio out of the scene is Dragon's massive new Karl. The full review is found on page 36.





From Your Editor

The State of the Hobby

Well, I'm no Ronald Reagan, but I would like to see if I can whip up the assembled audience into a fever pitch the way 'ol Ronny used to do. Have you guys noticed what's going on in the hobby lately? We've been touching on it in the new products section and I've been alluding to it in my editorials, but our little hobby is well and truly blasting off. Let's review.

The last year has seen the biggest growth spurt in armor in its recorded history. Over 20 new plastic kits have been released. Did you get that? Twenty new kits just in plastic. The number in resin, when factoring in conversions as well as full kits, is nearly 60! So, if you've been in a buying mood, you could have over 80 new models waiting to be built (are you done yet?).

To top it all off, we are also seeing the hobby push the outer edges of the subject envelope. Dragon has already released its Karl Mörser (reviewed later in this issue), while Trumpeter promises its own version with the rail transport carriages included. This particular kit is pre-selling in Japan for about $85.00. No word on U.S. retail, but it can't be that far off. Both companies have also announced a K5 "Leopold" rail gun and Dragon is already posting its box art. Parenthetically, I should mention that the Tristar Karl Mörser has been shelved while the commotion from its rivals calms down.

Is there one root cause for all this activity? I think a lot of it can be attributed to the Internet. It has been responsible for not only disseminating ideas for new kits, but also for disseminating information on the kits themselves. Companies interested in certain subjects have no trouble in finding excited modelers to assist them in obtaining data on vehicles. Almost all of the new kits, both resin and plastic, as well as conversions, have come from two places: China or Eastern Europe. As I mentioned, the big plastic players remain DML and Trumpeter, and to a somewhat lesser extent, AFV Club and Tristar. What's interesting to me is that all these new releases are very well thought out, not just slapped together.

Trumpeter continues to amaze, not only with the level of detail, but also with the tremendous value inside the box. A case in point is the recently arrived Chinese Ballistic Missile Launcher. Odd subject aside, this kit, which is packed in a nearly bulletproof cardboard box, contains hundreds of parts, a fully detailed engine, transmission and interior, hollow rubber tires, a respectably sized sheet of photo-etch, wire and steel rod. All of this is priced at only $79.95. By the way, their willingness to do large molds will be further exploited with a tank transporter version. Please consider that this will make it only the third transporter to ever be done in styrene. And, they have only been doing "serious" kits for about two years. Just think what they'll do to top themselves!

The new AFV Club 10.5cm gun is another jaw dropper. Although these kits are never cheap, the standard of quality meets or surpasses the old benchmark, Tamiya. For instance, the main shield of the gun has no knockout marks. Ditto on the delicately molded trails. Also in the box are baffled tubing for the actuator rods and a turned brass barrel. This is pure state-of-the-art, just the way you like it.

And don't forget about Tamiya. Don't count these dudes out just yet. In spite of the sluggish Japanese economy, they have managed to give us several exciting new kits and accessories. They might not be wowing us the way they did, say five years ago, but I'm sure Mr. Tamiya still has a few tricks up his sleeve.

Tristar is tempting us with interesting and unusual figure sets, but is also promising a special "surprise" German armor release later this year. I'd love to be able to tell you what this is, but I have no idea. Not even a hint. Given how well the Panzer I kit was received, it's certainly cause for excitement.

Before moving to the subject of resin, I'd like to rant a bit more about Trumpeter. Some of you may have heard that a few of their early releases were overtly "inspired" by resin kits. I certainly can't speak to this on every kit, but I have seen a detailed analysis of the AS90 model and it is most certainly a copy of the Accurate Armour item. This is not exactly a cool thing to do (and I certainly don't condone it), but the end result is not a complete disaster. Accurate Armor has already announced two comprehensive updates for the plastic kit! Basically, everybody wins and everybody still makes money.

I don't really consider Trumpeter to be bad as a result of their "borrowing." I think that they are just extremely aggressive about obtaining subjects and turning out product. They want to make their company a success. Certainly they are not borrowing from anybody when they render a Chinese Missile Transporter and frankly, the work is far better. My opinion about them is further tempered by anecdotes I've heard from Germany regarding the Faun Tank transporter. Apparently, several German modelers were instrumental in providing them with information on the vehicle, including plans, photos and drawings. Much of this stems from Trumpeter's expressed willingness to listen to modelers and even depend on them for release data. This is a pretty heady concept when you think about it. If you've been researching an obscure subject for years, you may just want to think about sharing!

In terms of resin, with plastic pushing the edge, is there still room for the rubber mold crowd? So it would seem. Most of the activity lately has been from Eastern Europe. Here are just a few of the names that have popped up in the last three years: 5-Star, Armo, Modeltrak, ToRo, Part, PanzerShop, Eagle CZ, JP Hobby, MK Models, Model Point, CZ-Kolinec, CMK, Plus Models and Wespe. And that's just the eastern part of Europe. From oldest to newest in the west we have PSP, Master Productions, Blast and MIG Productions. And the older firms like Accurate Armour, Cromwell, Azimut and Sovereign are still plugging away. In terms of quality, nearly all of it's great. I can personally vouch (big deal, right?) for the quality of Armo, Part, PanzerShop, Eagle CZ, JP Hobby, Model Point and Plus Models. PSP, Master Production and Blast all share a common casting source and the work is superb. MIG is a phenomenon all on its own. The quality is top notch and the subjects are wacky. And speaking of subjects, you'd think all these cats would be short on ideas. Yet, more and more cool stuff keeps emerging. We've never had it so good—really. There is certainly more to say on all the above companies and I'm sure I'm leaving more than a few unmentioned, but I think you get the gist of it.

There has always been a kind of institutional paranoia in our hobby. It's sort of like, "hey man, be careful, everything's gonna disappear any minute." Nothing could be further from the truth. There are millions of dollars invested in this hobby as we speak and more being poured in every day. Will companies and products come and go? Sure, business will always be business. But our little niche is here to stay. The State of the Hobby is good!

—Pat Stansell

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The Mail Sack

A bunch of bull

Although the accepted story is that the M-41 tank was originally named the "Little Bulldog" and then Walker was added after Gen. Walker's death, I wonder if it's accurate. I have read that General Walker had a couple of nicknames, "Johnnie Walker" because of his fondness for the Scotch and also "Bulldog" Walker. There is a book about him entitled "Patton's Bulldog." It just seems odd that the two names got tied together on the tank and not that it was named that because of him. Could this be the stuff of urban legends?

You guys should have slammed AFV for not including the mantlet cover on their M41 (they left it off the M18 too) when it's almost impossible to find a photo of an M41 without it.

—Ed Keene
kle0124@hotmail.com

Oh, Ed, can't we all just learn to get along? It may brighten your day to know that AFV has now released a cover just like the one that Skybow included in its kit. And the world is a better place for it...

✉

We love us, part one

I just would like to say thanks for putting together such a great magazine. I have been modeling from childhood to adulthood (I'm 38 now) and fell away from building armor when I was a teen to building models of vehicles that I was dreaming of driving. Well, last year at a local hobby shop I found MMiR magazine for the first time and I took it home and must have read it three times. The way the articles are written is great, with the history of the vehicle and the insight into building so that we do not fall into those problems that the author did.

I also love the humor that is added to lighten up the mood. Well, I am just starting my second year subscription and can't wait for my next issue. I am just learning about what a Pz.Kpfw. or a Sd.Kfz. is, but with more reading and a little help I hope to talk the talk like the best of them!

—Chuck Homolka
Elaine_Chuck@Ameritech.net

✉

We love us, part two

I am going through issue 31 and I wanted to say that I liked the style of the Marder review. I will rarely buy a new kit unless I have seen it reviewed in your magazine. I prefer to know what I'm getting into before I spend the bucks. I will say that while I have done several multi media kits, I always like to see your mag chock full of styrene kits.

—Lance Manion

We love us, part 8,626

Love the mag. Like probably everyone else, I read it cover to cover (your advertisers really like to hear this stuff, right?) To prove just how microscopically I dissect your magazine, what the heck kind of Panzer is featured in the Nemrod advertisement on page two of issue number 30? The tank featured in every photo of German figures appears to be a Panther or King Tiger chassis with a PzKpfw IV turret mounted on it.

Also, now that your website is up and humming, a suggestion: post color photos from your articles there! You've expanded the color in the mag significantly, but there are times when an article has no color whatsoever. It would be fantastic to be able to reference the projects online and see all of the photos in color. Use the web as the multimedia experience it should be. Before you say it would undercut the magazine, I'm not suggesting entire articles, just a gallery of the projects, in color. Color references are golden, and there were times when I would've loved to see the projects in color.

—Aric Gingo
aegingo@adelphia.net

You know, that's actually a great idea. We'll look into it. The tank that you're curious about is actually a Bergepanther with a Panzer IV turret bolted to the top. It was one of several unique vehicles used by the Schwere Panzerjäger Abteilung 653 in Russia. The gun was basically used as a Sturmgeschütz, as the turret could not be rotated. This worked out pretty well, as the 653 was formerly a StuG unit. For more information on the 653, see Fedorowicz's Combat History of the Panzerjäger Abteilung 653. *ISBN: 0-921991-37-1.*

✉

I'll be bach

To update the letter from Michael Kalbfleisch in issue 28, the Kindergarten Cop's tank now resides at Motts Military Museum, 5075 S. Hamilton Rd., Groveport, OH 43125. Groveport is a few miles southeast of Columbus, not far from Rickenbacker International Airport. Keep up the good work!

—Russ Bielanski
russ830@horizonview.net

✉

Lions and Tigers, and Fiats—oh my!

I'm an Italian fan of your magazine, and I buy all the issues, which inspired me a lot.

I'm getting sick of WW2 German subjects dominating the armor modeling industry. Granted there were some non-German subjects last year, but the Germans still hold the lion's share of the market.

Quite a few other countries in the world built tanks and AFVs, but they are not represented. The Germans are very interesting and had some great stuff. I build many World War Two tanks myself, Axis and Allied. I have my share of Tigers and Panthers, but enough is enough.

Why not a Tamiya Italian Fiat/Ansaldo AB40/41 four wheeled armored car, also used by the Germans. This is a simple kit with tons of reference. I hope that will be soon released.

—Carmelo Gianni
carmelogianni@tiscalinet.it

You know that's a fantastic coincidence. We are just starting to get some Italian subjects in for review. We're not sure when they will appear, but detail articles on both tracked and wheeled AFVs are "on the board." As for more Italian subjects overall, we're all for it!

Word to your Bulldog

I wanted to say thanks for the great side by side review on the M41. I was glad to see that the kits band tracks were used. I personally like the modern band tracks that are out there, I can make them work and look good. Granted, some subjects require link to link, but over all the new band tracks are good to go. Even better is when we have a choice in the box, like in the M3 Stuart "Honey." Word-up—way to go Academy! I hope we see more "modern" band tracks.

—Frank Blanton
blantonf-n@worldnet.att.net

✉

Where da resin women at?

In issue #30, you guys mention the dearth of female German auxiliaries. Granted, the poses aren't conducive to a flak position, but have you ever seen Junior Town's "Blitz Mädchen" series? (I don't recall seeing them in your previous looks at the female figure market.) They're a start anyway...

You can see images on the Great Models web site (www.greatmodels.com), a good site for looking at kits & figures.

—vonglahn@clevelandmagazine.com

We recently nabbed a few of these babes and they're not too bad. The series is meant to depict four of the women getting out of a Kübelwagen or other small vehicle. This could easily form the basis of a "training visit" scenario, with a stern looking male instructor next to your favorite piece of AAA or AAA related equipment. The complete line of Junior Town figures can also be seen at www.junior-town.com.tw

✉

No doubt that Hank will thank, re: Shank

Towards the end of Hank Johnson's letter in #30 he commented about "two large horizontal grooves gouged into the hull, behind the road wheels, just above the torsion bars" and commented he didn't remember them being there on the Shanks he commanded.

Well, they are there. I just visited the First Division Museum in Wheaton, Illinois, where they have a '551 on display and the grooves are there. The Jaguar kit appears to portray them as sideways U-shaped grooves and on the real '551 they actually look more like sideways V's. I don't really know the reason for them, but I thought Hank might like to know that they were there.

—Joe Starns
Joe.Starns@cibavision.novartis.com

Hey Hank, d'ya hear that?

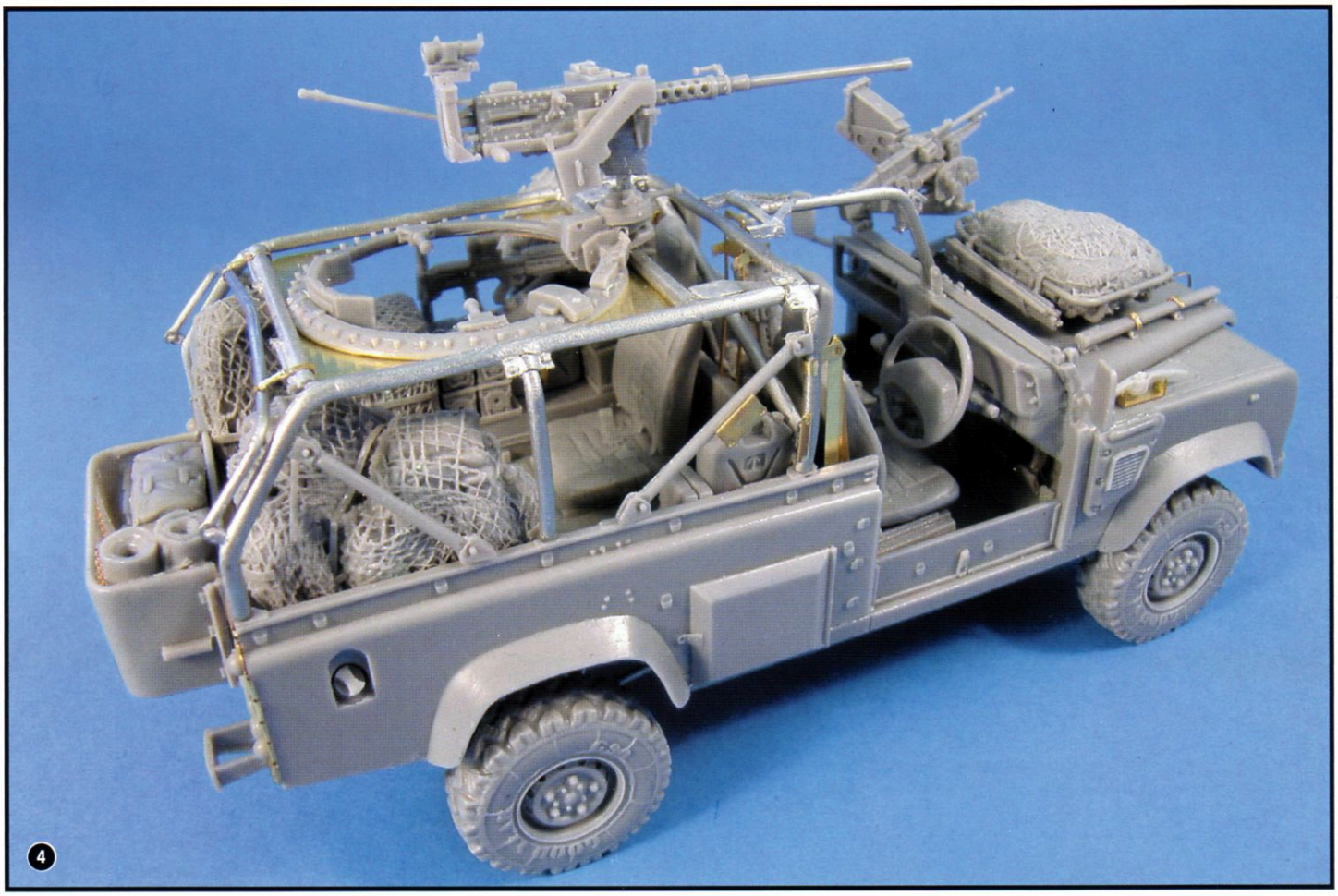
✉

If you would like in on any of the dialog in MMiR, drop us a brief letter written on a fifty dollar bill or better yet, inscribe it on the bottom of an Accurate Armour LCT converted to a LCT (R) with 1,064 rocket launching racks mounted onto a false deck and send it to: ***Mail Sack, Ampersand Publishing Co., Inc. 235 NE 6th Ave., Delray Beach FL 33483*** *or* ***mmirpat@aol.com.*** *Letters are sometimes edited for brevity, obscenity, national security, or just to make you sound smarter.*

We sincerely regret that we rarely, if ever, are able to personally enter into correspondence with our readers.

Short Takes

The Year in Preview



Aber

Among all the items that have come down the pike to enhance the new Tamiya Marder IIIM kit, the following are certainly among the most remarkable. **35125, Marder III, Ausf. M Vol. 1 Basic set (Tamiya), $22.99 (1a, b)** and **35126 Fenders for Marder III Ausf. M Vol. 2 Additional set, $15.99 (2)**. Both are multiple frets just stuffed with detail parts. Very clever stuff. **35L-03, German 2cm gun barrel Flak 38, $5.99**, is actually a spiffy turned brass barrel with a teeny photo-etched fret to make the muzzle brake and a few other small bits.

Accurate Armour

Rust never sleeps and apparently neither do the fiendish minds at Accurate Armour. Here is what's new and seen as of early 2003. **K113, AEC Deacon 6 Pr Portee, £72.33 (3); LR003, Wolf Tum WMIK, £51.05 (4); A060, AS90 39Cal Upgrade Set, £38.30 (5a, b); A061, AS90 52Cal Upgrade Set, £38.30; A071, Pershing Full Cover Mantlet, £7.23; A073, Challenger 2 Wheel Set, £10.21; C077, IDF M88A1 ARV, £6.81; DE06, UN Markings & Logos, £6.83 (8); DE15, KFOR, IFOR, SFOR Markings, £6.83 (9); DE17, Challenger 1 Decals, £7.23** and **DE18, Centurion MBT Decals, £7.23.**

All of this stuff and some of the following were on display at the 2003 Trucks & Tracks show. Interestingly, we had the unique experience of seeing the Wolf Tum WMIK kit at the show and then seeing the real thing hammering away in Iraq! An awesome kit either way. The AS90 stuff is also timely and both sets will go a long way (or even all the way) towards improving the new Trumpeter kit (which is said to be largely based on the AA kit).

Future projects include K014, Valentine Mk-II/IV, K015, Valentine Mk-III/IV and K016, Valentine Mk-IX/X. All three kits return, this time with decals. K032, FV432 **(6)** also makes a return appearance with interior and decals. Up and coming are K53AK, Challenger 2 Up Armored (Kosovo); K53AG, Challenger 2 Up Armored (Gulf) **(7)**; KT134, 17/19 RB Crawler Crane; H3501, Lynx Helicopter; S11, Japanese Type A Mini Submarine and LCT (4) Tank Landing Craft. All prices and release dates on these items are TBA.

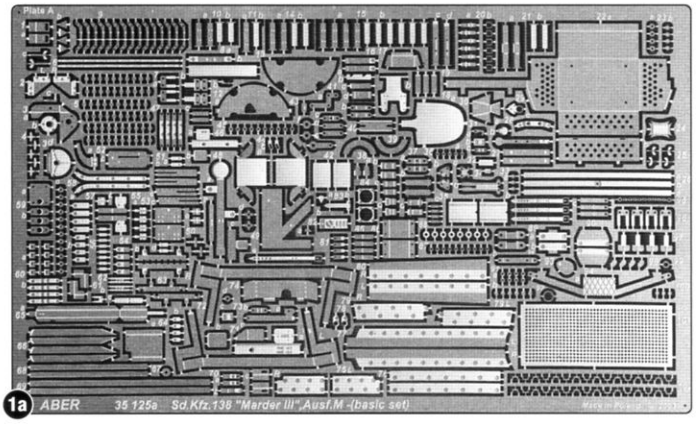
Although it has already been announced, we also snagged a few new pictures of the M103 master **(A)** on display at the show.

For more current dope, see www.accurate-armour.com

AFV Club

Here's the latest rundown from the boys at the Club. **AC35001, M41 Gun Shield Cover; AF35050, leFH18 10.5cm Howitzer; AH35016, NATO YRP-765 AIFV; AF35030, M4A3E8 HVSS Suspension; AF35056, M3/M5 Volute Spring Suspension; AF35S20, M3A3 Free French; AF35031, M40 self-propelled Gun** and **AF35059, 88mm AT Gun PAK43.**

The 10.5cm gun is hitting the streets as we write this and the appearance of the "Easy-Eight" finally means the release of the M40 is imminent. That Pak 43 is an odd one, but it does share a carriage with the 10.5cm gun. A real live kit was on display at the Shizuoka Hobby Show this past spring. All exact prices and release dates are TBA.



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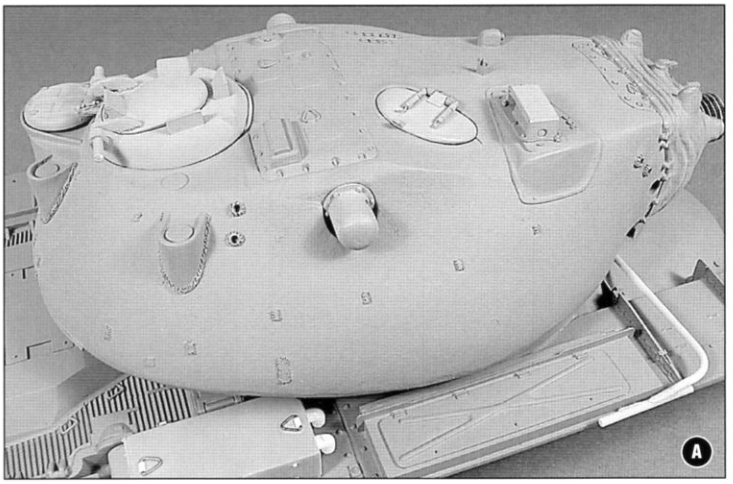

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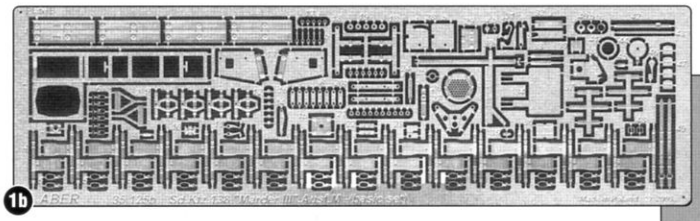

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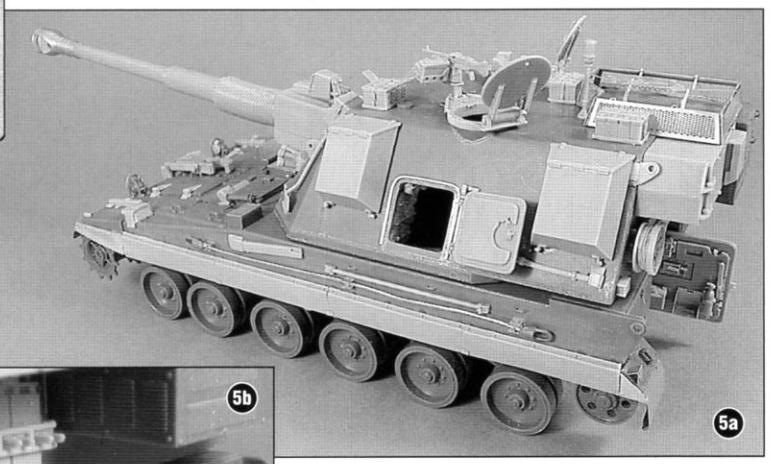

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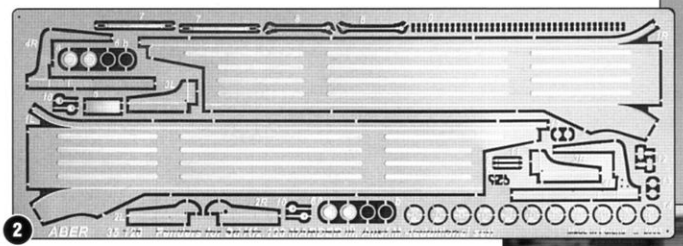

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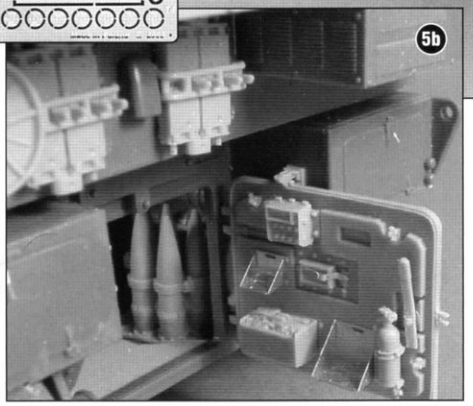

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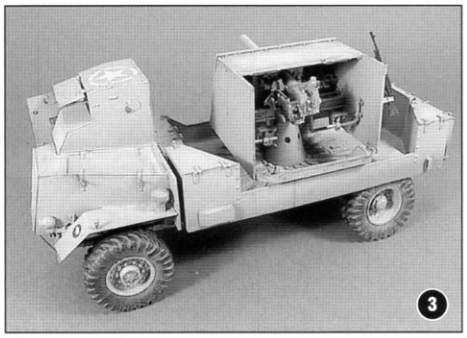

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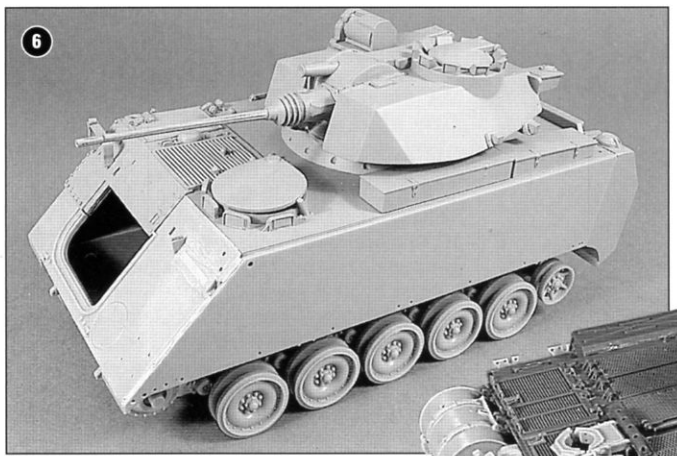
additional items on the way; certainly enough to keep us excited for a while!

Our prices were supplied by Mission Models. Ordering information can be found at www.mission-models.com, or for our overseas friends at www.blast-models.com

Cast'A'Coat

This new company is offering a small, but useful set of **Surface Simulation Powders (11)**. The set is composed of four bottles, each of which contains different solutions for creating texture on any scale model. The various mixtures are used together and utilize both wet and dry mediums.

The basic set is composed of two "Surface Simulation" powders. One is very fine, for smaller models and the other is somewhat less fine and is intended for 1/35th-scale models. The remaining bottles contain setting solution and a thickening liquid. The idea is to apply the powders over the setting solution to create varying textures. The mediums can be used in different combinations to create effects like anti-slip surfaces, concrete, weld lines or even Zimmerit anti-magnetic paste. All in all, a pretty nifty little idea.



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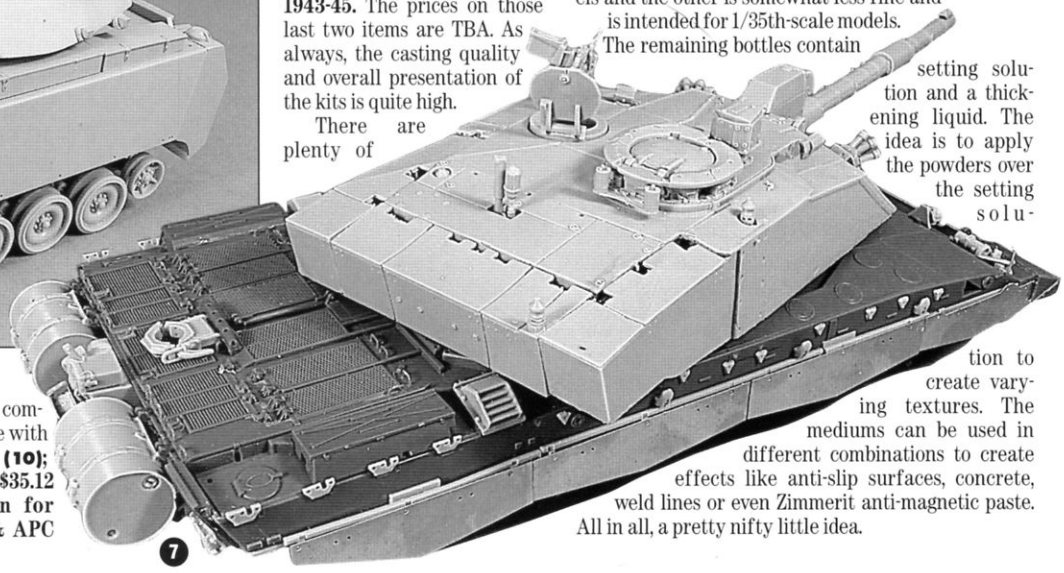

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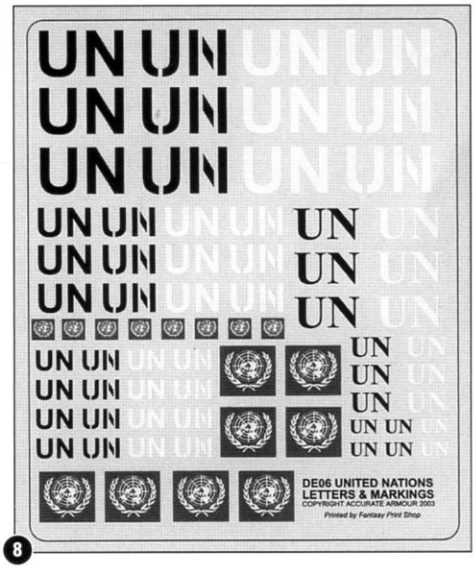
Blast Models

Certainly one of the most exciting new resin companies, Blast continues its lively release schedule with **BL35009K, IDF Tank Accessories, $30.00 (10); BL35016K, VAB T20-13/For Heller VAB, $35.12 and BL35019K, IDF Tiran 5 Conversion for Tamiya T55, $55.00; BL-35018, IDF Tank & APC crew, $25.00; BL35021F, French Soldier 2000** and **BL35022K, Panzer IV Accessories Eastern Front 1943-45.** The prices on those last two items are TBA. As always, the casting quality and overall presentation of the kits is quite high.

There are plenty of



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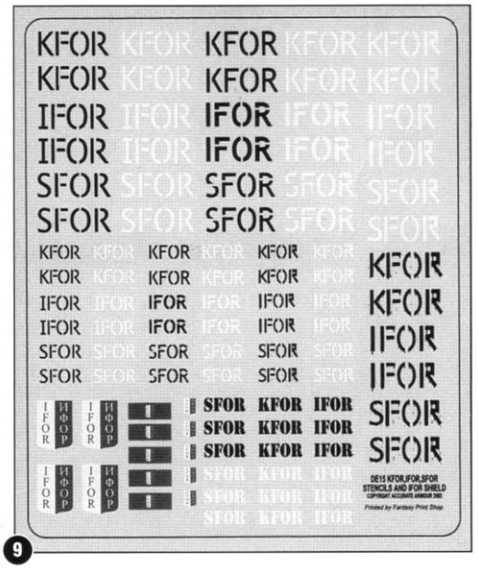

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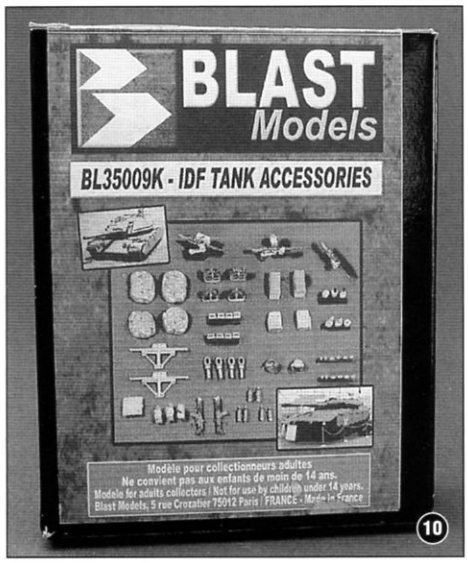
BLAST
Models
BL35009K - IDF TANK ACCESSORIES
Modèle pour collectionneurs adultes
Ne convient pas aux enfants de moin de 14 ans.
Models for adults collectors / Not for use by children under 14 years.
Blast Models; 5 rue Crozatier 75012 Paris / FRANCE - Made in France

10

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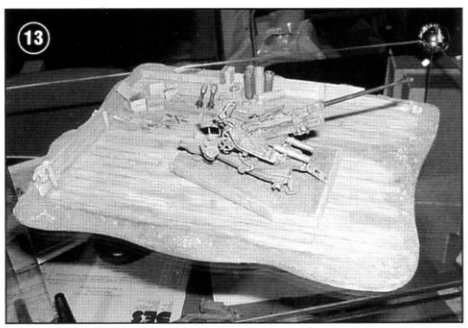

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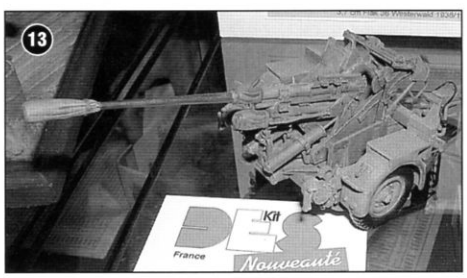
For more information, contact The Small Shop EU, Honeysuckle Cottage, Pound Lane, Gillingham, Dorset, UK. Fax: 01747 825 646 646.

DES

Lots of goodies from our old buddies at DES. 35088 is the **10-ton Trailer to tow behind either their new Federal (12)** or their older Autocar for $95.00. This is the shorty version of the trailer. **35089 is a 5-ton dolly for a tandem trailer arrangement** using two of the above for $40.00. Pretty cool. **35090, 3.7cm Flak Westerwald 1936/45 (13)** is a unique version of the ubiquitous German flak gun. This outstanding kit can be built on or off the trailer and includes two barrels with and without the canvas muzzle cover. The price on this is $65.00. The last item up is **35091, FLAK 20 with pedestal (14)**. This is a single mount naval version of the weapon that was also used in fortified positions. Retail on this last item is TBA.

Both Mission Models and The Red Lancers stock the line in the states. For more information contact either of them or DES direct at DES Kit, 27, rue des Hauts de Bonne Eau, 94500 Champigny sur Marne, France.



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Decalcomaniacs

As the name implies, these cats are nuts over decals and they specialize in a variety of wacky markings. If you are seeking the odd or unusual, this is the place. Here is the current rundown. **DM002, The Finnish Army, $8.00; DM003, The Brasilian AFV's, $8.00; DM004, The Arab Armies, 1948-1973, $8.00; DM005, Early U.S. Army Stars/Serial Numbers, $8.00; DM006, Modern U.S. Bumper codes, $8.00; DM007, Hungarian AFV's, $8.00; DM008, The French Army, 1940, $8.00 (15); DM009, The Russian Liberation Army, $8.00; DM010, Russian Slogans, $8.00; DM011, IFOR/SFOR/KFOR markings, $8.00; DM012, U.S. ammunition containers, $8.00; DM013, The Slovak Army, $8.00; DM014, Bulgarian AFV's, $8.00; DM015, U.S. Light Tanks 1920-1940, $8.00; DM016, U.S. National Insignia 1940-1942, $8.00; DM017, U.S. Medium tanks 1940-1942, $8.00; DM018, Silly Slogans (Russian)#1, $8.00; DM019, Arab Armies #2, $8.00 (16); DM020, Churchills, Stuarts & Sexton, $8.00; DM021, Free French WW2 markings, $14.99; DM022, Yugoslavia at War, $9.99 (17); DM023, Russian Prewar Tactical markings, $8.00** and **DM024, Rumanian AFV's, $8.00.**

For more information see www.decalmaniacs.net, or e-mail them at decals@decalcomaniacs.net, or even the old fashioned way at Decalcomaniacs! 315 South Avenue, Garwood, New Jersey 07027.

Eduard

In the plain ol' photo-etch department we have **35524, MLRS NATO interior (Dragon), $TBA; 35538, Strv 103 S-Tank (Trumpeter), $24.99; 35539 SCUD B exterior set (Dragon), $TBA; 35540 SCUD B interior set (Dragon), $TBA; 35544, Strv 103 S-Tank Additional set (Trumpeter), $22.99; 35549 M-107SPG (Italeri), $TBA; 35561, Schurzen Panther A (Italeri), $22.99; 35559 Sd.Kfz.250/5 Neu Beob.Pz.Wg (Dragon), $TBA; 35562, Schurzen-Zimmerit Panther A (Italeri), $19.99; 35563, Zimmerit Panther A (Italeri), $14.99** and **35564, Zimmerit King Tiger Porsche turret (Tamiya), $14.99.**

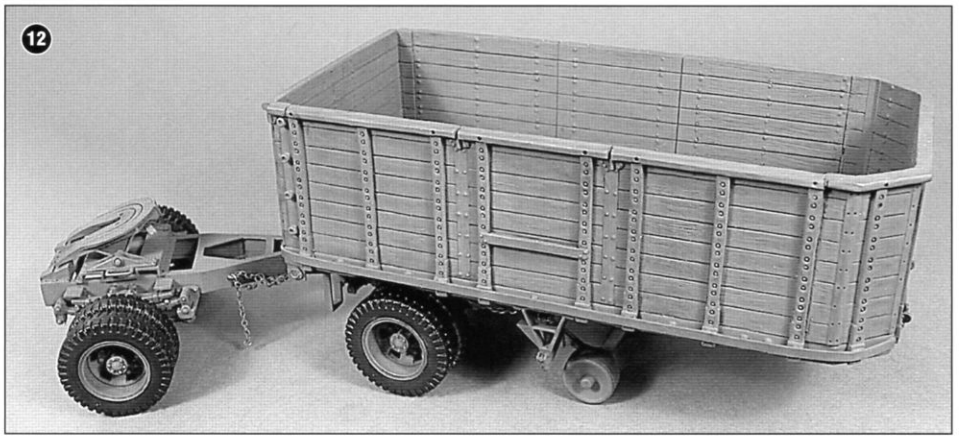
In the "Zoom" line, the following are up and coming. **TP032, Sd.Kfz.251/D Stowage box (Tamiya) $TBA; TP033, Sd.Kfz.250 driver visors (Dragon) $TBA; TP034, MLRS launch top cover (Dragon) $TBA** and **TP035, MLRS walkways (Dragon) $TBA.**

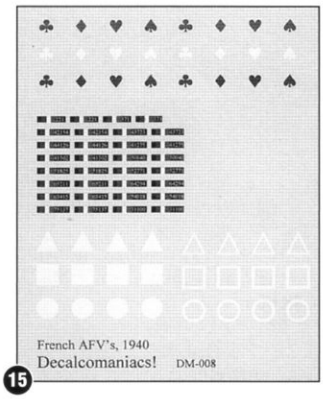
Comin' down the Express Mask pike are: **XT059, T-55A wheel mask (Tamiya), $4.99; XT060, King Tiger wheel mask (Tamiya), $TBA; XT061, SCUD wheel mask (Dragon), $TBA; XT064, M3A1 Stuart wheel mask (Academy), $TBA; XT065, Sd.Kfz.250 wheel mask (Dragon), $TBA; XT070, Sd.Kfz. 251 wheel mask (Tamiya), $TBA; XT073, M-113 wheel mask (Academy), $3.99** and **XT074, Morser Karl wheel mask (Dragon), $3.99.**

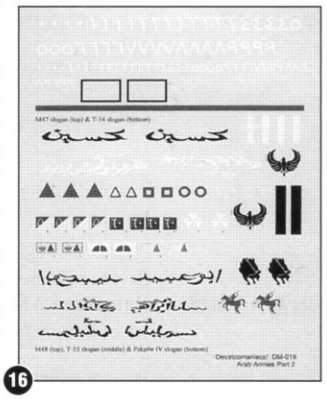
And back at the Tank Barrels range... **34019, M4A3 Sherman (Tamiya 35122), $TBA and 34020, T-34/76 (Tamiya 35059), $TBA.**

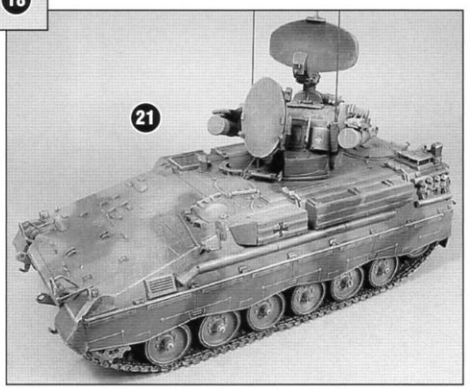
Elite

Quite a few new items from this small, but prolific German manufacturer (all prices are in Euros). **35302, Crew for 3.7cm Flak (8 figures), 48.50 (18); 3540, Ammunition Trailer 3.7cm, 29.50; 3542, Mercedes L 1500 A with 7 figures, 99.50 (19); 3542a, Mercedes L 1500 A with one figure, 64.50; 35301, Crew for Heavy Car, 42.50; 3543, SdKfz 251/20 Uhu, 72.50 (20)** and **3541, Rakenflakpanzer 1 Roland II, 98.50 (21).** This last item is the anti-aircraft missile version of the modern Bundeswehr Marder.









The entire line is pretty massive and worth taking a look at. For more information contact them at Elite Militärmodellbau, Eichgasse 13, D-52393 Hürtenwald/ Straß or mmb.moers@t-online.de

Fine Molds

The boys at Fine Molds have cracked out a couple of more barrels, just for you. **MG47, Sweden Strv 103C MBT, $17.00 (22)** and **MG48, T-55, $17.00 (23)**. MG47 even includes a few empty shell cases that would look cool lying next to your S-Tank.

Gauntlett

Talk about your peppy release schedule! Lots of inexpensive and useful stuff from these bad boys. Check out **AG115, Panther A&D Fans & Ducts (24)** for $6.95. Simple resin parts to foil those penlight toting weenies. **AG116, Early Hetzer Wheels (25)** at $13.95, with detail on both sides. And **AG117, Late Hetzer Wheels** going for $13.95, again with detail on both sides, but with only half as many rivets.

M&Models is your singular point of contact here. See their ad elsewhere in this very mag, or check them out at www.home.earthlink.net/~mmodels

Hobby Fan

Hobby Fan, the resin arm of AFV Club (how would you like to have a resin arm?) has the following new

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Includes illustrated placement and painting instructions

AR35151 $11.95 — IS-2m
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Includes illustrated placement and painting instructions

AR35140 $11.95 — ISU 122-152
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AR35033 $6.95 — Soviet assault guns SU-85 & SU-76
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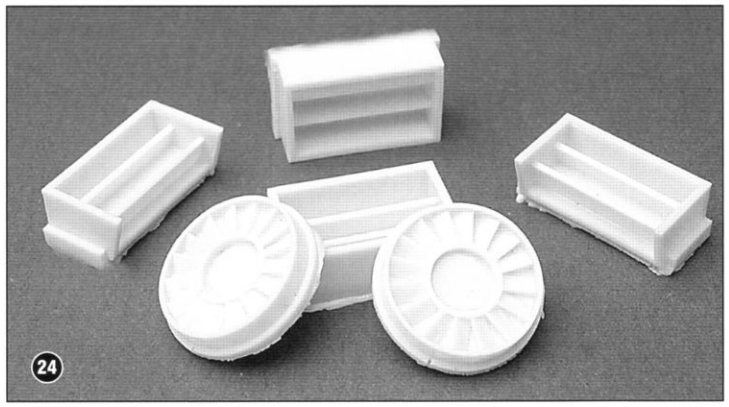
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treats in store for you. **HF546, German Eastern Front Rocket Launcher Crew (1); HF547, German Eastern Front Rocket Launcher Crew (2); HF548, FH18 Gun Crew Eastern Front (1), 4 figures** and **HF549, FH18 Gun Crew Eastern Front (2), 4 figures.**

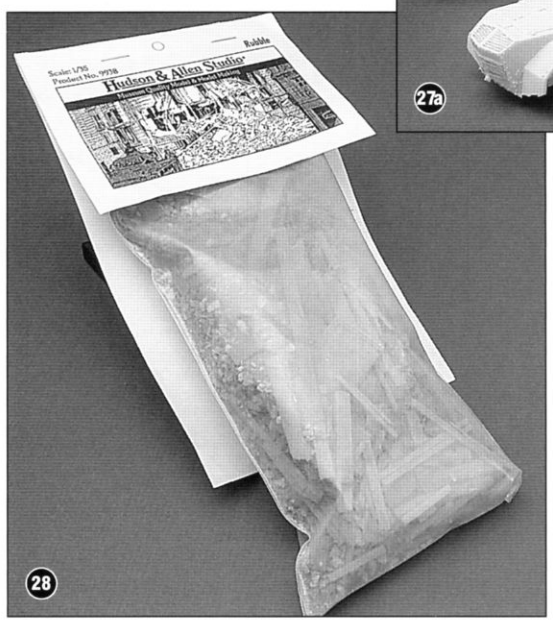
No word yet on retail or release dates.

Historica

The new owners of Historica have made a real commitment to improving the quality of their kits and the results are visible in their new offerings **HP1018, Camionnetta Desertica Mod. 43 (26)** and **HP1019, Autoblinda AS 43 (27a, b)**. There have also been major improvements in many of their older kits as well. We have both the above kits in the shop right now and the quality is, indeed, pretty high. Both kits are cleanly molded in tan resin with little or no over pour, and both also contain clear and comprehensive instructions and a small sheet of decals.

27a

26b



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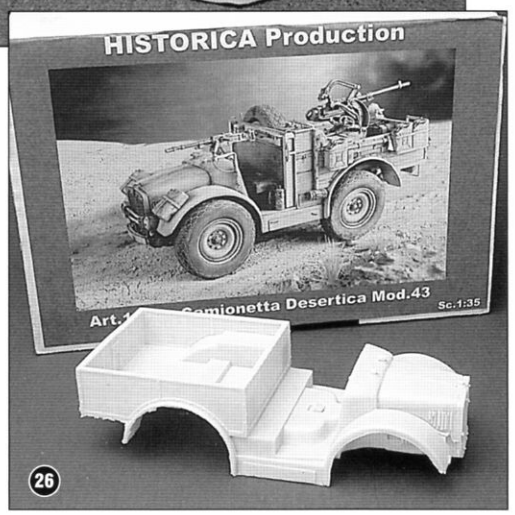

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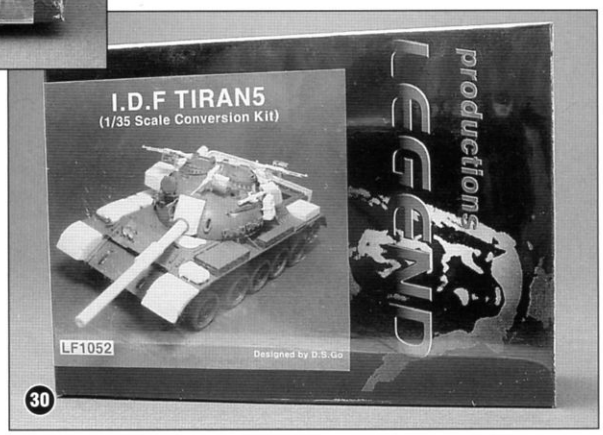
The retail on HP1018 is $74.00 and the price for HP1019 is TBA. Both kits can be obtained from R&J Enterprises, P.O. Box 39, Quilcene, WA 98376-0039, Tel/Fax: (360) 796-3828 or through their web site at www.rjproducts.com

Hudson & Allen Studio

These guys continue to amuse and amaze! **9622, WWII U.S. Gas Mask & Small Arms Box Markings** is a super useful set to decorate all manner of spare stuff on your diorama base. **9706/9703, Norway Maple Leaves** is a follow-up to their earlier release, this time in a fall, reddish shade. **9935, Winter Grass**, is also a follow-up in a drab tan shade. Last is **9938, Rubble (28)**, real nifty mixture of wood, plaster, rocks, wallpaper and other general junk to spread around damaged or destroyed structures. The mixture even includes powdered glue, so that it can be adhered to the base with a light over spray of water.

The H&A line is available through your local hobby shop or VLS Mail Order.



Hussar Productions

Following close on the heels of their first releases (decals) comes a very intriguing selection of brand new stuff. **35001, KV Steel Wheels; 35002, KV Steel Wheels with Internal Shock Absorbers Type I; 35003, KV Steel Wheels with Internal Shock Absorbers Type II; 35004, KV Wheels with Internal Shock Absorbers Type III; 35005, 45mm Russian Ammo (Brass); 35006, 76mm Russian Ammo (Brass) with Decals; 35007, 85mm Russian Ammo (Brass) with Decals; 35008, 100mm Russian Ammo (Brass) with Decals; 35009, 122mm Russian Ammo (Brass) with Decals; 35010, 152mm Russian Ammo (Brass) with Decals; 35011, Sd.Kfz 252 with Ammo Trailer (Resin)+Aber PE** and **35012, T34/85 Turret with Interior for Dragon Kit.**

This entire line is distributed by Air Connection and more information can be found in their ad on page 31.

Legend Production

This Korean company has a well-earned reputation for quality with crisp, clean resin castings and color instruction sheets. Here's the latest. **LF1048, IDF Magach 7C Conversion, $65.00 (29); LF11052, IDF Tiran 5, $22.99 (30); LF1053, IDF Merkava MkII/III Chain Ball, $12.00 (31); LF1054, IDF Tank Accessory Set, $19.99; LF1055, IDF Merkava MkII Turret Basket & Chain, $14.00; LF1056, Magach 6B Conversion, $18.40** and **LF1057, IDF Tank Mg Fn Mag, $9.99.**

Our prices and samples were provided by Mission Models.

Lion Roar

This is a new company from China that is bent on taking the photo-etch market by storm. Their line includes both photo-etched detail sets and turned brass barrels. Here's the very latest. **LE35016, Jagdtiger (DML or Revell); LE35017, Karl (DML); LE35018, Nashorn (DML); LE35020, PLA Type 89 Multi Barrel Launcher (Trumpeter)** and **LE35021, PLA Type 83 SPG (Trumpeter).** We will be following up in the next issue with scans of a few sample sets.

More information on their earlier releases can be found through their U.S. importer, VLS, or at the Lion Roar web site at www.lionroar.net

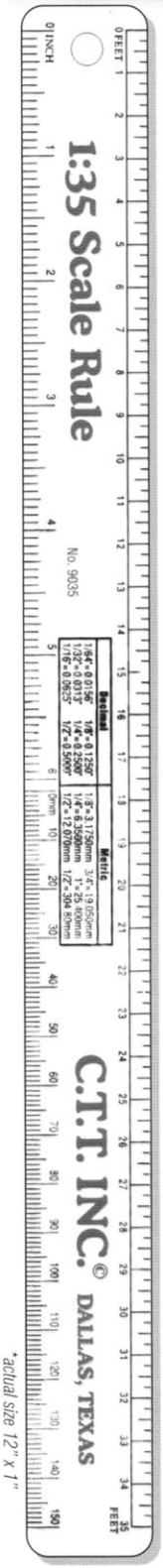
Masters Production

Masters keeps on fleshing out their great line of GMC truck accessories with **35002, GMC Driver Team (2 figgys), $TBA (32); 35005, Stencil 2db Markings (PE template for the 40mm Bofors truck), $TBA; 35009, GMC Hard Top Conversion, $24.25 (32)** and **35011, GMC Hood, $TBA.**

Also new is **35010, US M10 Ammunition Trailer, $24.25 (33).** This is a pretty cool little item and would look great towed behind just about anything that shoots.

One very exciting new item that was on display at this year's Trucks & Tracks Show was a **Chevy 1.5-ton**

How Does Your Armor
MEASURE UP?



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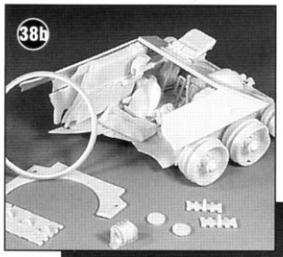
truck (34). This is sort of a mini-GMC with a single rear axle. We're looking forward to this one.

For more information see Mission Models in the states, or Blast Models in Europe.

Milicast

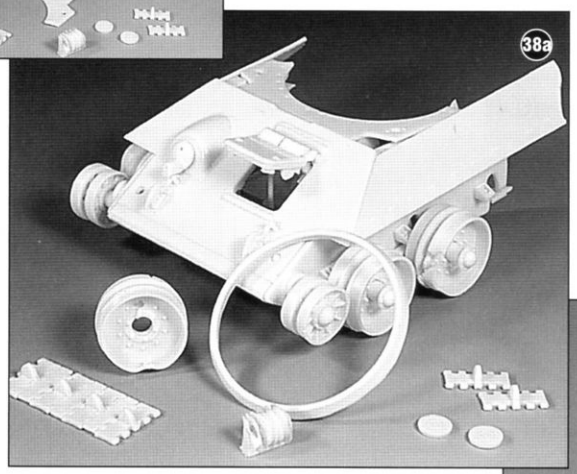
OK, OK, so we caught the small-scale bug, so what? We spied the most amazing little 1/76th-scale vehicles and figures at the 2003 Trucks & Tracks show. **US 108, American M4A1 Sherman (Mid/Late) with Applique Armour (Optional Turrets) (35); Acc.20, American T1E3 Mine Roller for M4 Shermans "Aunt Jemima;" G86, "Grille" Sp SIG 33 auf PzKpfw 38(t) Ausf H Sdkfz 138/1 ("Bison") (36)** and **G146, Panzerjager I Ausf 4.7cm PaK(t) Pz.I Ausf. B**. We also threw in a photo of the **CMP 6-pounder Portee (37)** just for the hell of it.

For more information on the entire range of Milicast items contact them at P.O. Box 711, Glascow G412DS, Scotland. Tel/Fax: 44 (0) 0141 571 0655.



MiG

Something really special is in store from our favorite crazy Spanish guy. It is **RW.35-018, Destroyed T34 Hull (38a, b)**. This amazing full kit includes a complete step-by-step construction and painting guide, destroyed and burnt out wheels and other spectacularly damaged parts all with different and diverse damage effects. The interior is also highly detailed, as is the exterior.



Also new are **MP.35-050, T55 gun mantlet without sand cover (Tamiya kit); MP.35-051, "SQUARE" Fuel drums for T34/76; MP.35-052, "CYLINDRIC" Fuel drums for T34/76 & T34/85 (with damage effects); MP.35-056, GAZ 66 tires military pattern (5 units)** and **MP.35-057, GAZ 66 tires civilian pattern (5 units)**.

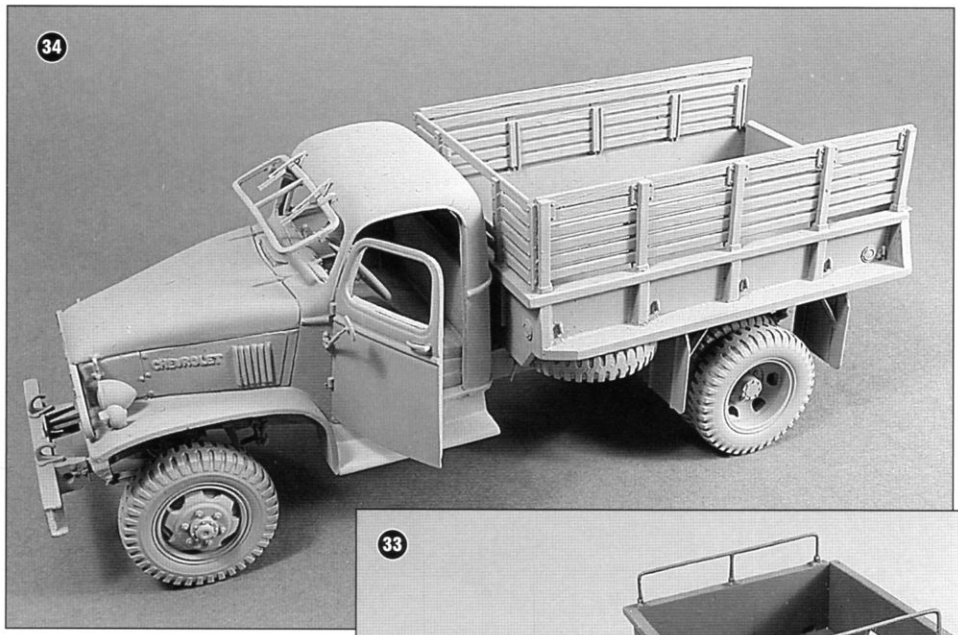
Lots of stuff coming in the smaller scale, too. Look out for **MP.72-047, City Cobblestone Sections; MP.72-048, Diorama Sea Harbor; MP.72-058, German Kradmelder (Motorcycle messengers) 2 figures; MP.72-059, German Fallschirmjäger (3 figures); MP.72-066, TIGER I ammo wooden crates (9 units); MP.72-067, KING TIGER ammo wooden crates (9 units); MP.72-068, PANTHER ammo wooden crates (9 units)** and **MP.72-069, Pz IV (long barrels) ammo wooden crates (9 units)**.

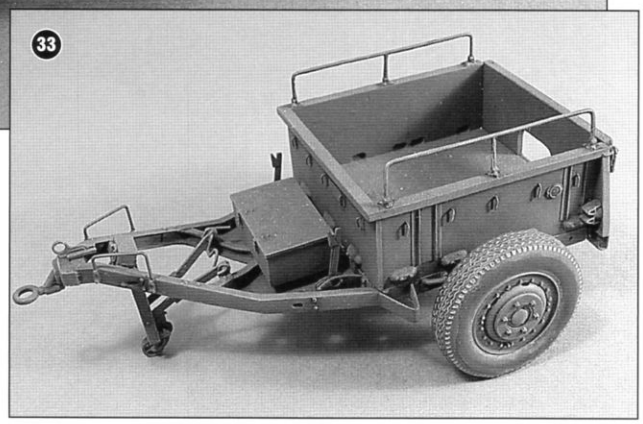
Mission Models, R&J, Great Models, Blast and Red Lancers all deal in the line (we're sure, among others). Check with them on the current developments or see www.migproductions.com

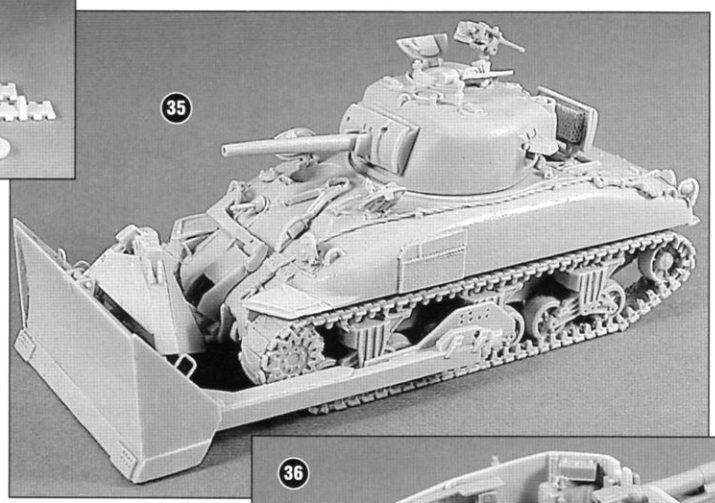
Model Maker Products

Hey, look! How about some cool pigments, grown right in our own backyard? Model Maker Products is now offering the following powdered pigments in neat little plastic jars. Here's the list. **001, Soot Black; 002, White; 003, Dust (Concrete); 004, Dust Desert; 005, Sand; 006, Medium Earth; 007, Earth/Dirt; 008, Dark Dirt (Mud); 009, Brick Red; 010, Worn Panzer Grey; 011, Forest Green** and **012, Dirty Steel**. They represent a pretty substantial value, too at just $2.25 per jar **(B)**.

For more information check out their web site at www.ww2modelmaker.com







New Connection

It's always something special from these guys from Germany. Their newest are **35244, T26 German Tank hunter 7.5cm Pak 97-38, 47.50 Euro** and **35243, recovery version of the Panzer II J**. This last item will retail for 57.50 Euro and includes the Alan kit.

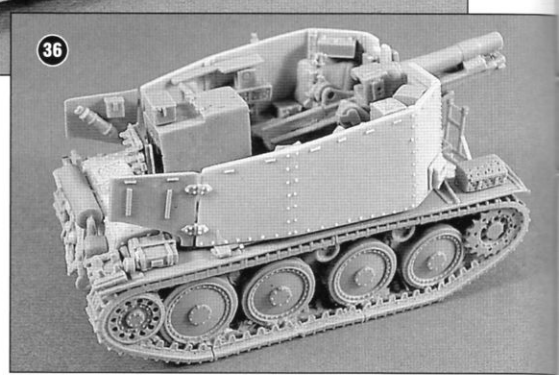
Future items are **35248, 120mm Mörserträger on Marder III chassis, 47.50 Euro**, and a **turned metal barrel for the 3.7cm "Jaboschreck,"** complete with milled cross perforations.

For more information on how to obtain these items, see the New Connection website at www.new-connection.de

Panzer Shop

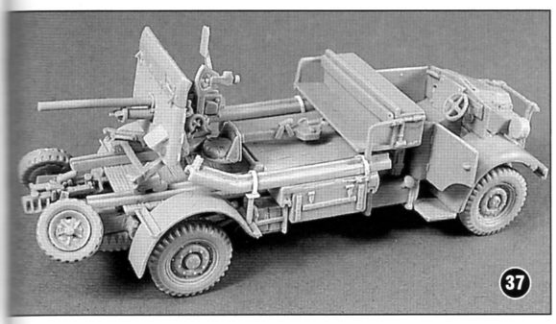
Here is a run-down of what is new and coming from this prolific Czech resin company (all kits are 1/35th). **PS35C110, Gun Carrier Mark. I w/60pdr Mark. II Field Gun** is a complete resin kit WW1 tracked armor vehicle with a field gun. This baby contains over 300 parts and it measures out at 37cm long with the gun when complete. The kit is composed of photo-etch, decals for four different vehicles, fine metal chain and wire.

PS35C112, Gun Carrier Mark. I SUPPLY is a complete resin kit WW1 supply tracked armor vehicle.



This guy has 280 parts and is 27cm long when complete. Photo-etch, decals for four different vehicles, and wire also round out this dude.

V35C107, Type 91 So-Mo (Sumida Type 2593) is a highly wacky looking WW2 Japanese road/railroad armored car that is complete with a resin railway line, photo-etch and metal wire.



Future kits will include **R-175, SS-1c SCUD B**, yet another complete resin kit of the good-sized operational-tactical ballistic missile array on the ISU-152/JS-3 tracked chassis. And in addition to all the resin fun, you get photo-etch, decals, Friulmodellismo metal tracks, Friulmodellismo metal road wheels and a Model Point metal antenna. This is slated to be available in autumn of 2003.

2S7 PION is a complete resin kit of the enormous Soviet self-propelled gun on a tracked chassis. Of course, there's photo-etch, decals and a Model Point metal antenna. This will be available winter 2003/2004.

In the conversion department we have, **PS35217HT, T-55AM2 Kladivo/Hammer**. This is a resin conversion set for the Tamiya T-55. This mega-conversion also includes photo-etch, decals for two different tanks, Friulmodellismo tracks (with sprockets), Model Point antenna and rubber tubing for the fuel hose.

The following T-54 conversions will all be designed for the Tamiya T-55 kit and will feature a new barrel, decals, turret, engine cover and road wheels. **PS35218, T-54-3 (mod. 1951); PS35219, T-54A; PS35220, T-54B** and **PS35221, T-55AM1**. In addition to the stuff mentioned above, this last item will also feature a laser finger, SDIO and commander cover. All of the T-54 stuff is price and release date TBA.

Both Mission Models and Chesapeake Model Designs carry Panzer Shop in the U.S. and more information can be gleaned at www.missionmodels.com or www.chesapeakemodeldesigns.com respectively.

Pro Art Models

Pro Art, known for their terrific update sets for the Hemmt Fuel Truck have diverted themselves into **PAU35100, Full Wheels For Sdkfz 234 Puma (Multi Set), $25.00** and **PAU35101, Flat tires for Sdkfz 234 Puma (Multi Set), $25.00.** These are both very well done, as well as crisply molded. The flat tires even feature a two piece hollow tire. Cool.

Another Hemmt item is up and coming. This is a fully detailed crane for the cargo version **(39)**. Price and release dates are both TBA.

For more dope contact them at Pro Art Models, Gooreindse Leunen 35, 2440 Geel, Belgium. Tel. 0032 (0) 14589680, Fax 0032 (0) 14589680. E-mail: proartmodels@pi.be

R&J

Here's what is new and coming in the "in-house" line from R&J. Out now is **RJ35005, Pz IV Variants Lower Hull, $28.00**. This will be a detailed module to drop in a variety of models and will include the tranny, walls, braces and all the stuff that you can see through the hatches. Some of the components of this set may also be available separately in the future, such as the battery box and driver's compartment. Several rear hull plates for the Panzer IV are also planned.

More Puma details are also to come. Engine and compartment; fenders, dented and damaged; muffler and damaged wheels and tires are all TBA.

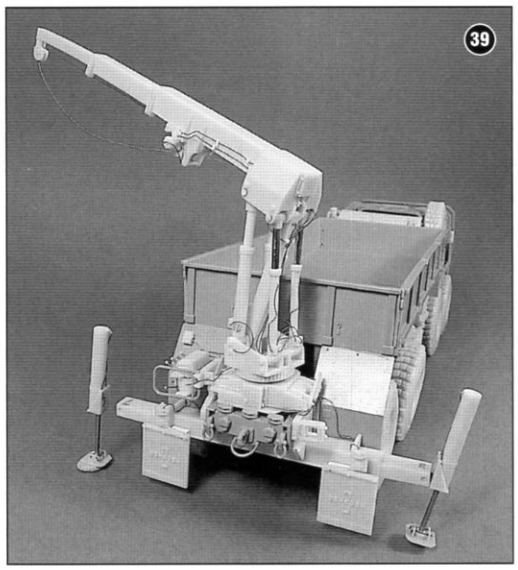
Also look for some interesting items for the DUKW, such as a waterline hull and deflated tires.

Most of these items are slated to be out by the late summer of 2003. We'll bring you up to date information, as it becomes available.

Definitely creating a theme, we have **M113A2 Desert Version, M2A2 Bradley IFV Modified Version, M966 Humvee TOW Missile Launcher Carrier** and **Modern U.S. Military Equipment Set.** The Bradley and the M113 are souped up versions of their older kits, but with some pretty interesting gear. The entire Modern U.S. Military Equipment Set is included with each and each also has the friend or foe panels. That equipment set is a nice one, too. All the rucks you'll ever need and the rolled Thinsulate closed-cell pads so common today are in there, too. The Humvee is the natural follow-up to their earlier version.

They are also sparking up the 1/16 World Figure Series with **WWII German Machine Gunner on Maneuver.** This is a pretty cool looking dude on the march with an early war theme.

More information as it becomes available. As always, up to date poop can be had at www.tamiya.com



Resicast

Up and new are **35237, Steering for GMC, $12.00; 35238, Steering for Jeep (Tamiya), $12.00; 35239, Steering for M8/M20 (Tamiya), $12.00** and **35240, DUKW Steering Axle, $12.00.** These sets have been selling for around $12.00 here in the states.

Resicast has introduced a whole new range of clear lenses for use on vehicles and tanks. Here is the list. **35242, 10 x clear lenses 1mm; 35243, 10 x clear lenses 1.5mm; 35244, 10 x clear lenses 2mm; 35245, 10 x clear lenses 2.5mm; 35246, 10 x clear lenses 3mm; 35247, 10 x clear lenses 3.5mm; 35248, 10 x clear lenses 4mm; 35249, 10 x clear lenses 4.5mm** and **35251, 10 x clear lenses 5mm with rim.** We liked these because they are sized in millimeters and ten complete lenses are supplied in each packet. Check 'em out!

The new **Late M4A1 (40)** kit is now available. This is really something to see. This is the ultimate Sherman kit and it includes many, many small and unique details. If you are a dedicated Sherman devotee, you should definitely scope it out.

Resicast products are available in the states through Mission Models and The Red Lancers.

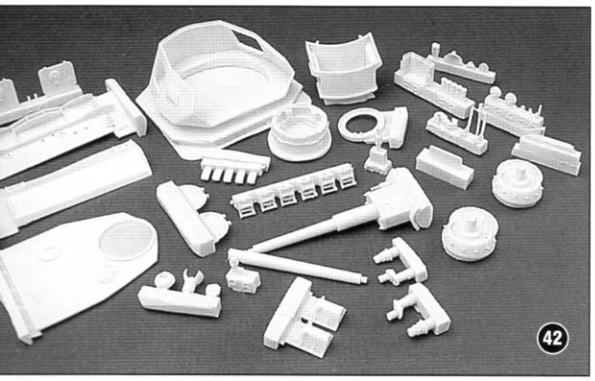
Tamiya

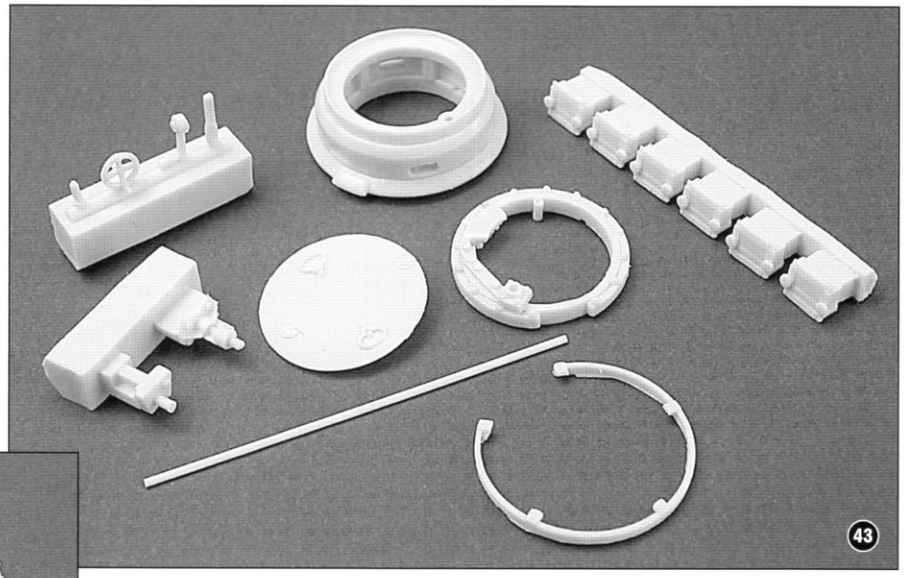
Tamiya was showing a few interesting new goodies at this year's Shizuoka Hobby Show. Actually, the following are so new that even the exact names are TBA. Ditto on pricing, stock numbers and availability.

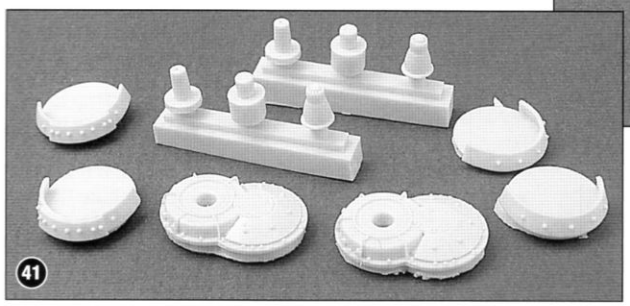
Tiger Model Designs

Rub your hands together with glee, the boys at Tiger Model Design have been busy again! Looky here: **355002, BRDM-2 Replacement Wheels** is a full set of round thingees for the DML kits at $11.95. **353005, U.S. Sponson Box Handles** will come in real handy for the entire Patton series right through to the M1A1 for only $3.95. **352031, Panzer IV B-G Drive Housing (41)**, is a real simple, but beautifully detailed set for any Panzer IV kit within the letter range, priced at $5.95. **352034 is Panzer IV F2 Conversion (42)** for Tamiya Panzer IV H. This is yet another amazingly cast and designed conversion set containing a complete turret (hollow cast, in two pieces), gun, final drives, hull panels, cupola and other parts for just $29.95. **352082, SiG 33 for Grille M** is a complete and fully detailed replacement gun and cradle to replace the nasty plastic one contained in the Alan Grille M kit. All this love for a scant $19.95. And we saved the best for last. **352091 is a Panther D Cupola with interior (43).** This is an incredible little piece of casting. The main part of the cupola is poured from the bottom, so it's just a matter of carefully scoring it to remove the delicate part. No hacking, no sawing. The cupola is detailed inside and out and contains all the parts for the opening mechanism and azimuth indicator. It's designed for the DML D kit and it's an unbeatable value at only $11.95.

For more information contact Tiger Model Designs, PO Box 1254, 6439 Wolfe Lane, Youngstown, FL 32466 or see their web site at www.tigermodels.com. They can also be contacted via e-mail at tigermodels@aol.com







Trumpeter

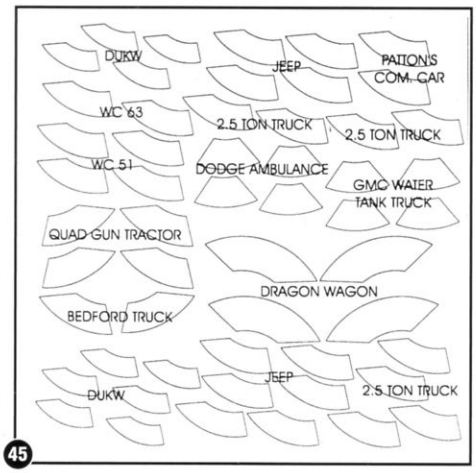
Here is the updated release list on the Trumpeter Juggernaut. This includes items also ready announced and all dates are U.S. in 2003. **05102, Mil Mi-8/17 Hip Helicopter; 05103, Mil Mi-24W Hind E Helicopter; 00311, KV1 & KV2 Soviet Tank; 00201, Chinese 50-Ton Tank Transport (June); 00202, Chinese DF-21 Ballistic Missile Launcher (June); 00203, German Faun Elefant Panzer Transport (August); 00204, Soviet SA-2 Guideline Missile with Loading Cabin (based on Russian SAM II) (September); 00205, Red Flag 2 missile w/loading cabin (September); 00206, Soviet SA-2 Guideline Missile with Launcher (September); 02303, Chinese 105mm Type 75 Recoilless Rifle (July); 01001, Zil-157 Soviet Army Truck (September); 01002, Jiefang CA-30 Chinese Army Truck (September)** and **01003, Zil-157 Soviet Army Truck w/canvas roof (September).**

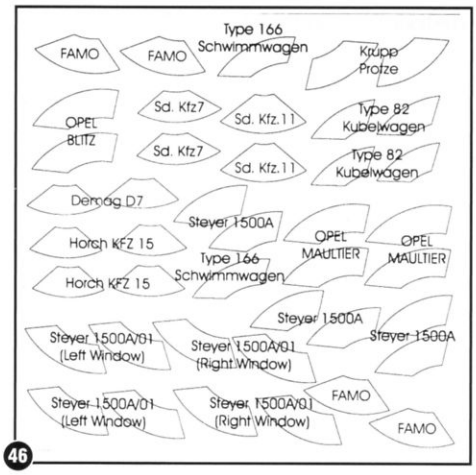
In 1/35 figures, we have **00401, 12th Waffen SS Division Normandy (1944) (June); 00402 GD Division in Poland 1939 (Part I) (June)** and **00403, Panzer Division Das Reich Belgrade 1941 (June).**

Verlinden

Here's the VP list as of more or less right now. **1899, Marder III Ausf. M (75mm) Stowage and Ammo; 1900, Military Models & Dioramas Vol. VII; 1903, Middle East / Oriental Pottery; 1905, In Harms Way British Paras; 1906, German Infantry WWII Lock'n Load; 1907, US Tankers Chow Time; 1908, Soviet Tanktroops; 1909, Farmer & Wife Europe WWII; 1910, DUKW Canvas Cover; 1914, Bloody Tarawa Diorama Base (sunken Sherman tank, 10 figures, 2 palm trees and various accessories); 1915, DUKW Detail & Update Set (Italeri); 1916, Comrades, German Tank Crew (4 figures); 1917, GI's WWII Chow** and **1918, Move! German Infantry.**

See their color ad on page one for all the cool color photos and other, future goodies. Up to the second information can also be found at www.verlinden-productions.com





VLS Productions

Yet another of our hobbie's dependable juggernauts, VLS has also done the whole paramecium thing and divided itself into a series of full-fledged product entities. Remember: resistance is futile. Let's take a peek, shall we?

In **135th Construction Battalion** land we have **CO 0005, Enclosed Arch Window and Door Facings (3pieces), $10.95; CO 0006, Large Block Cornerstone Set (2 Pieces), $10.95** and **CO 0007, Granite Support Pillars (2 Pieces), $10.95.** Very intriguing stuff for those of you with the architectural twinkle in the eye.

Under the **Custom Dioramics** banner comes the "Premier Series" of ceramic building sets. On line are **CD 1128, Brick Wall with Stone Caps, $14.95; CD 1135, Tobruk AA Bunker, $18.95; CD 1136, Russian Barn, $24.95** and **CD 1137, Village Wall, $14.95.**

Custom Dios resin accessory grows away with **CD 6056, Beer Steins (10 Pieces, 5 different steins) (44), $5.95; CD 6065, RR Electrical Junction Box, $12.95; CD 6067, RR Steam Separator, $12.95; CD 6068, RR Crossing/Checkpoint Guard Arm, $15.95** and **CD 6071, RR Mainline Signal Tower Set, $16.95.** Bust out those rail cars, dudes!

In the Trakz line, look for **0028, WWII U.S. Vehicle Wiper Masks, $7.95 (45); 0029, WWII German Vehicle Wiper Masks #1, $7.95 (46); 0030, U.S. Star Masks, $7.95** and **0031, German Crosses Masks, $7.95.** Those wiper mask definitely fall under the "Whytheheckhasn'tanyonethoughtofthisbefore" category. You'll go spaz when you see them. We already are using them and the magazine hasn't even come out yet. ARRRGGGH! OK, sorry about that. A great value, too and reusable to boot.

For more information on all the VLS line of products see their web site at www.moelmecca.com

Wespe

This small Romanian company's release list currently looks like this: **WES35017, Opel Olympia Cabriolet; WES35018, Horch 830 Sankra; WES35019, Opel Kadett Cabriolet; WES35020, Skoda Diesel 254B-3t; WES35021, Opel Super 6; WES35022, Skoda Diesel 706-7t; WES35023, Opel Kapitan; WES35024, Leyland Monty Caravan; WES35025, Fiat 508 C/1100 MIL; WES35026, Ford C11 ADF (Alexander); WES35027, GM 8449/C15TA-15cwt 4x4; WES35028, Leyland Hippo Mk II; WES35029, Renault ADH 2. 5t; WES35030, Ford JA3; WES35031, Camionetta MOD. 42 (SPA Viberti); WES35032, Lancia Aprilia Coloniale; WES35033, Fiat 1100 Ambulance-Wood Cab** and **WES35034, Lancia 3 RO-Militare.**

There is certainly some interesting stuff in there. We currently have no line on U.S. retail or a U.S. agent. We'll bring you more information, as it becomes available. To contact them directly, write to Wespe Models at 23 North Balcescu Street, 2000 Ploiesti, Romania.

Book Reviews

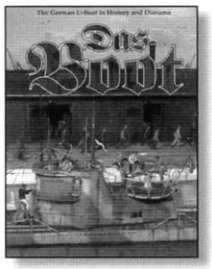
1944, Americans In Brittany The Battle for Brest
by Jonathan Gawne
Histoire & Collections
Hard Cover
160 pages, B&W with some color
ISBN 2-913903-21-5

OK, FIRST OFF LET US DISPEL any confusion that might arise from the title. This book isn't about GI's on leave in England or any part of the human anatomy. It is an extremely well researched and written book about an important and successful American campaign that has long been overlooked by history. Brittany is the region of France south west of the Normandy area; it is a wide expanse that juts west into the Atlantic Ocean. On the coast of Brittany are the important seaports of Brest, Lorient, Saint-Nazaire, and Saint-Malo. Additionally, in August 1944 Brittany also contained upwards of 100,000 German troops. The Battle of Brittany was a classic demonstration of the use of armored and mechanized infantry units. It took place about the same time as the envelopment of the German Army at the Falaise pocket, which occupied most of the headlines. So even at the time the Brittany Campaign never received the credit or notice it deserved.

The book covers the time span from the end of July 1944 just after the break through at St-Lo to the end of September with the capture of the city and port of Brest. The author has done an exceptional job of explaining the campaign, the narrative is concise and it is quite well illustrated. There are almost thirty maps and diagrams, as well as close to 350 photos, some of which are from rare original color pictures. There are numerous shots of M4 Shermans, M8 & M20 Armored Cars, recon Jeeps, Dodge 3/4 ton trucks, M18 TD's and their crews in action. Of the GI's themselves, there are a large number of photos, many of which were taken under fire.

We found especially interesting the numerous Table of Organization Charts included for typical American Tank, Tank Destroyer, Infantry, Cavalry Recon, self propelled Artillery and Combat Engineer Battalions. They list not only the numbers for equipment but also personnel and are broken down to Company and Platoon level. Of special interest are about a dozen full color, modern photos of men wearing original WWII U.S. and German Army combat uniforms with equipment and weapons. Bocage fighting, close in air support, attacks on fortified positions, and house to house battles there all in this book. It's informative and satisfying reading at its best so put this one on your "must have" list.

Das Boot
Andrea Press
Hard Cover
135 pages, color through out
D.L.M.-18094-2002



THIS IS THE FIRST OF A NEW series of books by Andrea Press and is a top quality example of their work. Now we freely admit it is a bit off the beaten path for us, but from time to time it's good to look to the right or left instead of only straight ahead. Although this publication is about submarines in general and WWII German type VII C "U-Boats" in particular, let's not get bummed out and dismiss it out of hand. Why? You may ask, well the answer is quite simple, good modeling is good modeling regardless of the subject. There are several skills and techniques, such as scratch building figures, structures, weapon systems, weathering and water effects that are worth looking at.

"Das Boot" is basically two sections; the first part gives us a short history of the development of the submarine and a more detailed account of German U-boat's in both World Wars. There are accurate cut away views, charts, color prints of markings for about twenty different U-boats and over fifty interior color photos. The accompanying text is accurate and makes for interesting reading.

The second section is devoted to what has to be referred to as "the diorama." This is a 1/32nd-scale scene of a dry dock with a type VII C U-boat up on blocks. Also, there is a dockside section with associated buildings, several vehicles and over seventy figures, many of which were scratch built. It took a dozen craftsmen one full year to build and to say it is museum quality is almost an understatement! The book covers every facet of building the diorama from it's beginning to completion with text and photos. All in all "Das Boot" is an excellent book that's worth checking out.

Fallschirmjäger In Crete
by Jean-Yves Nasse
Histoire & Collections
Hard Cover
160 pages, B&W with some color
ISBN 2-913 903-37-1

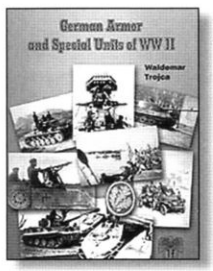
IN MAY 1941 THE SMALL ISLAND of Crete in the Mediterranean Ocean became a focal point of sustained heavy combat between German and British Commonwealth forces. The battle lasted 12 days and resulted in a victory for Germany. The campaign involved the large-scale use of airborne troops on the part of the Germans and although successful, the Fallschirmjägers took exceptionally heavy losses in killed and wounded. Hitler (who wasn't an easy guy to impress) was pleased with the victory but was so appalled by the losses to his airborne forces that they were never again used on that large a scale. The battle remains a classic of airborne operations and is studied in military circles to this day.

This book is lavish in the number of pictures (over 300), most of which come from the personal collections of the men who fought the battle of Crete. As such, most of the photos have never been published before. There are also six maps, the complete order of battle listing for the opposing forces and color photos of unit badges and decorations. The author has interviewed many of the veterans and has researched each photo in the book to make the captions as accurate as possible. The battle is told through the viewpoint of the men of both sides in their own words, rather than from the detached perspective of history. An overview of the events leading up to, as well as after the battle, is provided but the emphasis of the text is about the soldiers themselves and their experiences.

There are some photos of the equipment such, as Bren gun carriers, trucks, kettenkraftrads and 37mm Pak. However the majority of the pictures are of the men themselves. This provides a good study of the uniforms, personal equipment and weapons used.

If you enjoy reading about airborne operations, are a diorama builder or one who does figures, this book will provide a treasure trove of information and ideas. Well written, factual and great photos, a definite plus for anyone's collection.

German Armor and Special Units of WWII
by Waldemar Trojca
J.J. Fedorowicz Publishing Inc.
Hard Cover
382 pages, B&W
ISBN 0-921991-73-8



AS THE TITLE IMPLIES, THIS MASsive publication fittingly covers a wide and diverse range of WWII German equipment. Every type of German tank from the diminutive Panzer I to the immense Maus is well represented in photos and captions. There are twenty-two pages on the famed Panther alone, as well as a nice section on the Tiger II. We found intriguing a six-picture sequence of the only Tiger I to be saved from the battle of Sicily being transported by barge back to the Italian mainland.

There are two complete chapters on PAK anti-tank guns and flack guns, everything from 37mm to 88mm. Forty-four pages on the 250/251 series of half-tracks with many operational photographs. Wheeled armored cars, as well as "Wespe, Hummel, and Marder" self-propelled guns are also there.

The chapters on amphibious armor and equipment are quite engrossing, especially the information and photos on the rare LWS, Landwasserschlepper (it has the appearance of a cross between a tank and a tugboat). There are about twenty pictures of this unique vehicle. In addition, amphibious versions of the Pz. II and Pz. 38t are also covered. The coverage of the Pz.III "Tauchpanzer" was especially good. There is a series of fourteen photos taken during development tests of this submersible tank. The last chapter covers Coastal Raider Battalion "Brandenburg" and has a chronological listing by date of all of this unit's operations.

This is a handy reference on just about any type of German armored vehicle you would want to check out and a great source for those that had amphibious capability.

All review samples were submitted by the respective publishers with the exception of "Das Boot." which was submitted by Squadron Mail Order, U.S. representative of Andrea.

C L A S S I F I E D S

WANTED: Looking for unbuilt Gunze armor kits. Will trade or purchase. Have large collection with many hard to obtain kits for trade. Send info to Ted Paris, 551 Wegman Road, Rochester, NY 14624.

FOR SALE: Roskopf HO Scale Military Vehicles. German, Russian, NATO, Write for list: Christopher Gill, 580 W. Lewiston, Ferndale, MI 48220-1204.

THE HISTORICAL MINIATURE FIGURE SOCIETY OF COLORADO meets on the first Thursday of each month from 6:30 PM. to 8:30 PM. at the Aurora Central Public Library, 14949 East Alameda Drive, Aurora, CO 80012. For more info contact, HMFSC, PO. Box 461562, Aurora, CO. 80046 (303) 693-7924

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL MODELERS ASSOCIATION: meets the second Friday of each month (except holidays) in the Provident Bank community room, 1690 East Florida Avenue, Hemet, California at 7:00 p.m. CAHMA welcomes modelers interested in historical scale modeling, including armor/ordnance, aircraft, car/vehicle, historical figures, ship/boat, space/sci-fi, railroad, diorama and vignette. For more information, call 909-652-0556

IN SEARCH OF PENPALS AND MODELERS to exchange with. Can offer all models of Zvesda Plastic Model Co., ICE Co., Alan Hobbies/VM Co., AER, Start Model, models which are of a high class, and some books and magazines on modern military equipment and that of WW2. My interests include weapons of WW2 produced by Tamiya, DML, Italeri and ESCI in 1/35 scale. Also interested in books and magazines on techniques AFV and model catalogues. Write to: Alexandr A. Rjazanov, ul. Kronshtadskaja, d. 75, kv. 19, Makeeva-14, Ukraine - 339014.

MODELER FROM THE UKRAINE who would like to get in touch with other modelers to exchange models. I am looking for contacts with North American modelers. I will answer all letters sent to me. Andrey Kozlov, Zvenigorodska, 12 kw. 43, Zaporozhye - 93, 330093, Ukraine.

WANTED: Looking for a boxed UBER modeling knife set. The company that made them has gone out of business. If anyone has one for sale or has information on how to get one please let me know. Write or call: Larry McHam 1148 Simpson Dr. Hurst, TX 76053, 817-268-3167. E-mail is cynthiam@airmail.net.

WANTED: Concord Publication books: T64 & T90, T54/55/62 and Arsenal of Aggression. I am willing to pay a reasonable amount for these books in good condition. Please send information on these books and prices to John Wiley, 3120 Mountain Pass Road, Troutville, VA 24175.

WANTED: Tamiya photo album gallery books titled "Pachi" Vols. 55 to current issue. Please send info to: David Dees, 8125 Jeanie Lane, Knoxville, TN 37938, 423-922-2891 evenings.

FOR SALE: Built 1/35 scale armor kits. Nicely done with some external detailing. Please advise us of your particular needs or wants. Will consider requests to build. Currently, over 100 finished. **GOOD99** –New list of civilian /political /military/historical related pin, brochures, books, magazines, videos and other items. Mostly WWII to present. Send Two Dollars for GOOD99. Thank You. Bill Whitley, 311 Bundy Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760-3201 IPMS#20788. (607) 748-7922. bill0637@ aol.com.

WANTED: DML/Dragon Red Devils Paratroopers figure kit or resin figures in similar poses. Will pay any reasonable price. E-mail to simon@openstore.com

WANTED: Looking for ESCI 1/9th scale Kübelwagen. Must be unbuilt and all pieces attached. Please e-mail me selling price and cost of shipping to: Ironputts@yahoo.com

WANTED: Pro Models resin 120mm (1/15 scale) SdKfz 234/2 PUMA eight wheeled armored car Unbuilt, built, any condition. Contact : Robert McGuire, 482 W. San Ysidro Blvd. PMB 842 San Ysidro, CA, 92173 USA Phone: (619) 671-5400 (619)662-1420. Email: ignacio@biospherical.com or carellano@hotmail.com

THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL MODELERS SOCIETY: meets on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month at 7pm. We are one of the oldest chapters in IPMS/USA. For more information contact David Kimbrell at ivandak@aol.com or Rick Jackson at rjackson@socket.net

WANTED: The Show Modelling upgrade #044, for the Italeri German motorcycle and sidecar. Reply to: simon@openstore.com

WANTED: Model Art Co. book, (German Super Heavy Tank Maus) by A. Sergeev, I. Geltov, M.Pavlov and I. Pavlov. I am willing to pay a reasonable price for this book. Contact: Greg Nichols 428 Arrowhead Rd. Selma, AL 36703, phone: 334-875-5164.

WANTED: MMiR back issues #1 to 10, #17 & 19. Hunnicut's Stuart & Sherman books. Squadron Armor #5 Nashorn. These are for using not collecting. Will pay reasonable price based on condition. Contact with price etc. K. Bickel, 1225 Hickory, Palmerton, PA 18071.

WANTED: MB Models APX-4 Turret for the Heller Somua S-35. Alan Denton, 17 Clinton St., Everett, MA 02149. (617) 381-0371. Email: privateer1812@yahoo.com

IF YOU LIKE PIÑA COLADAS, getting caught in the rain, if you're not into healthfood, if you have half a brain, if you like making love at midnight in the dunes of the cape, you're the lady I've looked for, come with me and escape.

FOR SALE: Ten well painted and assembled resin, late World War Two German figures. All are in appropriate splinter, oak leaf or dot pattern camo. Figures are mix of Verlinden, Warriors or Dragon. Asking price is sixty dollars. E-mail Matunk@aol.com.

WANTED: Firepower: A History of the American Heavy Tank by R.P Hunnicutt, Kirin, catalog, Kirin 150mm figures—Vietnam and Desert Storm. Ed Barber, 5511 Waxhaw Hwy., Monroe, NC 28112. (704) 243-1154.

WANTED: 1/72, 1/76 scale and smaller armor, equipment and figures. Conversion kits and photo-etch kits for small armor vehicles. Books, magazine articles and information on the German army and Italian armies in Africa. Also collecting military and police patches. Please contact Peter Rechkemmer, 2223 Sidewinder, Los Lunas NM 87031.

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WANTED: WW2 book Tigers in the Mud by Otto Carius, Publisher is J.J. Fedorowicz I will pay any reasonable price. Can e-mail me www.orionpete@aol.com

WANTED: Raids Magazine-Les Chars Dc Combat #5, Panzer Magazine- The Iran-Iraq War, Tank Magazine - any issue, Tank Magazine Special T-80/72/64, Verlinden- # 714 T-55 Applique Armor, AEF Designs - any conversion kit (Israeli, Soviet, Iraqi, American) Azimut/ADV-PLO figure, Russian Tankers, French Tankers (Modern), Born in Baffle Magazine-any issue, Military Enthusiast- any issue, War Data - any Issue, RAIDS Magazine - any issue, Friulmodellismo Figures-Iraqi Tankers Yugoslav Troops, Civilian Photographer, Chesapeake Model Designs - T-54 turret, T-62 (early turret) Kirin- ZSU-23 interior. Contact Joseph Chiaramonte, 871126 Ave, Brooklyn NY 11214.

WANTED: Politically incorrect, but so much fun! I'm looking for several of the old 1/24 scale Rommel's Rod kits by Monogram at reasonable prices. Want as builders, so any issue is fine. Contact Ken Mross, RR 1, Box 1029, Bartonsville, PA 18321. (570) 629-0297 evenings. mrossken@cavalier.net

WANTED: assembled or unassembled motorized or static armored vehicles. Contact Bruce W. Smith at gbeske@mn.rr.com or send your list with prices to 5808 Arbour Ave. Edina, MN, 55436.

WANTED: Old Verlinden item #03819? M132 Flamethrower Turret and #0153 & #0159 Verlinden dry transfers. Please contact with info to Chuck Homolka 1230 Hillside Rd. Seven Hills Ohio 44131 or Elvis815@juno.com

WANTED: Model pen pals to correspond with. Share ideas, reference and talk shop. I do science fiction and military kits, robots, mecha, figurines. Scales mostly are 120MM and l/35th-l/32nd scales, this varies depending on the subjects. I can ONLY respond to those in the U.S. and by mail ONLY, as I do not own a computer nor have access to one at this present time. I HOPE this does not keep you fellow modelers from answering my ad. To respond write to: RONALD BAUGHMAN, DS-0988, 1 KELLEY DRIVE, COAL TOWNSHIP, PA 17866

WANTED: MMiR back issues 1 through 19 in perfect condition. Top dollar paid! PAULO TERRA, Caixa Postal 214, Santos, S. Paulo 11001-970, Brasil. FAX: 011-55-13-3222-5248.

WANTED: Allied-Axis volumes 1, 2 & 3. Please contact Pete Samolinski at peteski@charter.net.

FOR SALE: Verlinden Productions Magazines - 26 issues total, all mint condition. All color great articles, ref. photos, models, dioramas, etc. No longer published. Vol. 1-no.4; Vol. 2-no.2; Vol. 3-no. 2, 3; Vol. 4-no.1, 2, 3, 4; Vol. 5-no. 1, 2, 3, 4; Vol. 6-no. 1, 2, 3, 4; Vol. 7-no.1, 2, 3, 4; Vol. 8-no. 1, 2, 3, 4; Vol. 9-no. 1, 2. Becoming harder to find in this quantity and condition. I will entertain any reasonable offers. Don't miss this opportunity! Contact Edward @ 330-677-5513 anytime or e-mail me, Vintilt@aol.com

WANTED: Two Revell of Germany Henschel Jagdtigers. Not the DML release. Also, the back issue of MMiR with the DML Jagdtiger on it. I am unsure of the issue number. Mike Barnes (352) 687-2206. Leave message.

WANTED: No time limit. Please include phone number and price/condition first letter. Armour Modelling #5. Gizmology #1. MMiR V1 #2, V2 #1 and any issues prior to #22. Steelmasters #2 and #32. AFV News and TANKETTE 1993 through present. US and foreign IPMS publications. Dio Bldg. and etc.: Deauville's #110 'The Bridge,' #112 Russian Log Cabin. Kurton #007 3-story 3-sided ruined bldg. Magus Program Design/Stevens Architectural 1/35 French Corner Cafe, Russian Wood House, Small Wood Barn and/or any of their blueprints. Delta and Remi 1/35 vacuform bldg. facades. Kits/Figs./Etc.: AMT-Palmer-Pyro 1/32 1940 Ford Tudor sedan. All 3 are different molds. Perry vacuform conversion for 1/32 Matchbox Legere. Still need 87 and 88 DML/Dragon catalogs. Need several 1/48 Bandai #8274 Fences and #8252 Bridge Girders. Thanks to all who helped with previous wants. Mike Overstreet, 5257 Luwana Drive S W, Roanoke, VA 24018-3323. 540-774-7244 7PM-10PM Eastern.

Every current subscriber to Military Miniatures in Review is entitled to a free classified ad for the length of their valid subscription. Submit type written copy only ***(no handwritten ads accepted)****. There is no space limit, but be as brief as you can (we mean: don't be a hog about it). Corrections, sales or omissions should be brought to the attention of the publisher as soon as possible to prevent re-occurrence. E-mail classified info to mmir35701@aol.com*

Sherman III ARV I

The old world meets the new and a conversion is born!

Many years ago I ordered plans of the Sherman ARV I from the Bovington Tank Museum. The plans were great and showed diagrams of internal and external stowage fittings, jib diagrams and so on. No text was supplied with the plans, so some of the numbered parts had to be deciphered as to their names and function. Things appeared obvious as to their use and function except for the methods of raising the jib and some stowage on the rear deck. Two versions were shown for each of these on the diagrams and I assumed they were alternate versions.

Over time I collected more information on the ARV I and built one based on the Sherman V (M4A4) using my plans and photographs. Resicast came out with their conversion kit and I purchased one and added it to my vast collection of unbuilt kits.

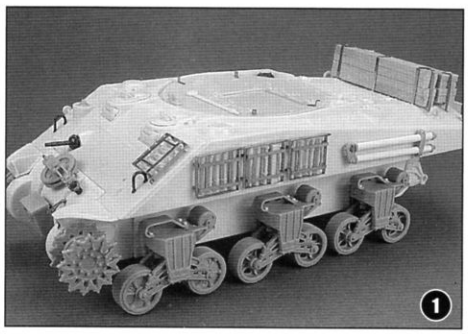
While on a discussion group one day, a participant (Ron Perry) offered an illustrated parts list from his *Chilwell Catalogue No 72/399*. He generously sent it to me and I was very surprised, as this list provided the part names and differences between the Sherman III ARV I and the Sherman V ARV I. The plans were the same ones as from Bovington but, now I had the answers to the differences in stowage and raising of the jib.

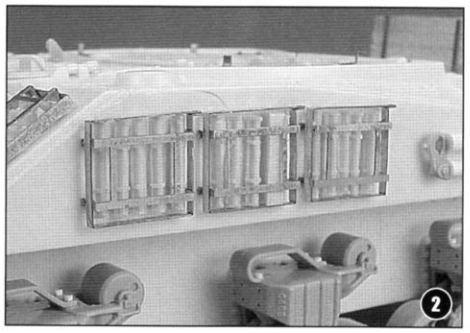
Chesapeake Model Designs produced an M4A2 (CMD29) which I purchased and so I was now set to build a Sherman III ARV I using the Resicast conversion kit.

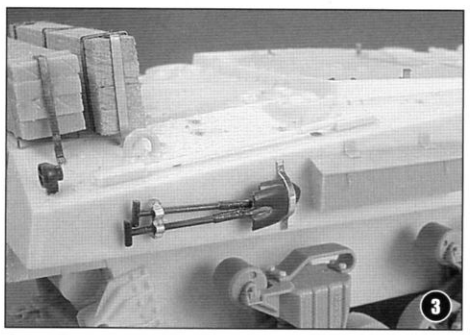
References of this particular vehicle were not easy to find as they were not as common as the Sherman V and it appeared that not many tanks were converted to the ARV role. Conversions were carried out by REME at Arborfield in Berkshire. These diesel engine ARVs were used by the 8th Armoured Brigade, the 27th Armoured Brigade and the 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade. References showed both the three-piece transmission and the one-piece transmission housing in service and both welded and cast hoods on the hull of the M4A2.

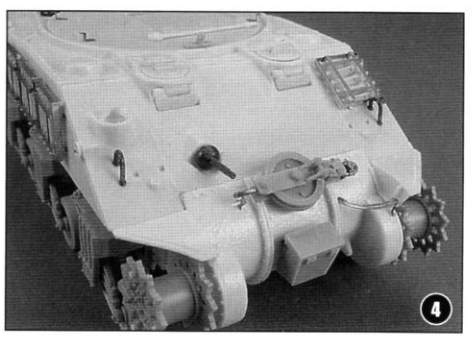
CMD's kit

This kit (CMD 29) was beautiful, well researched, and finely detailed. It represented an M4A2 Sherman with early direct vision slots and the three-piece housing. There were no air bubbles and detailing and casting was excellent. Mufflers, radiators, air deflectors and adjustable idler axles were provided. The direct vision slots and hatches were nicely detailed and weld beads were depicted very effectively. Front fenders with ribs and casting numbers on the front transmission were delicately cast. Drain holes on the horns of the transmission housing were also cast in position

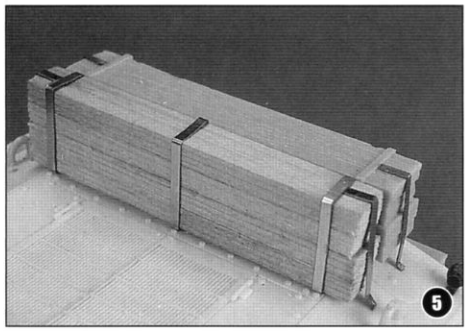


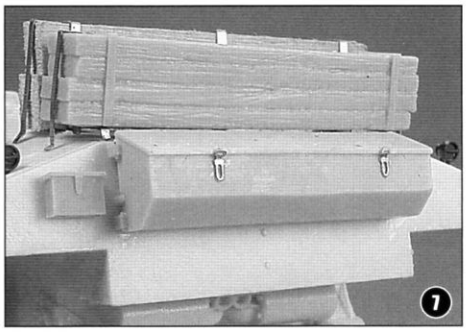




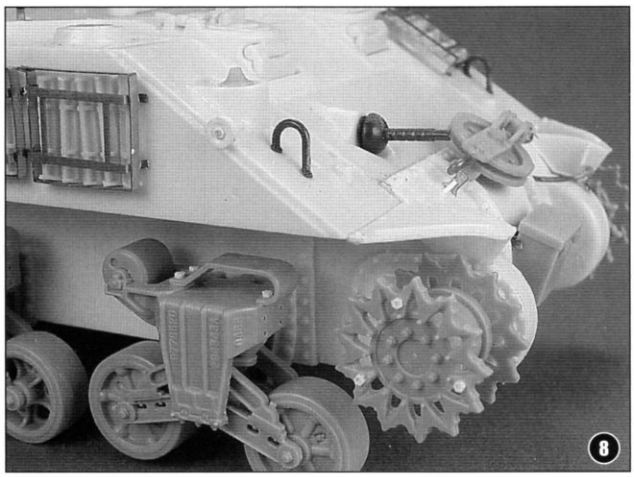


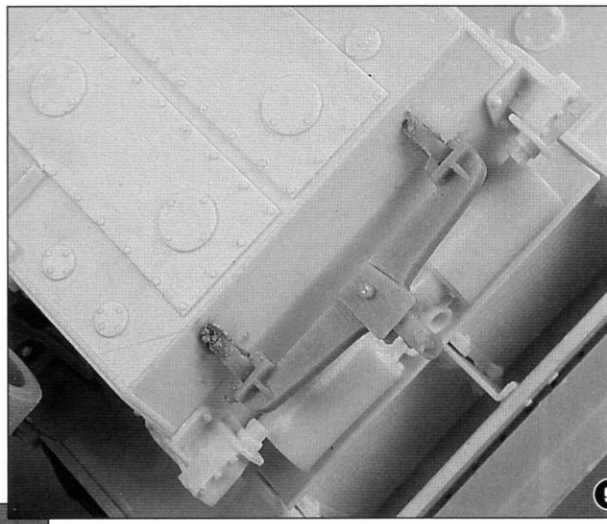
1. The running gear was selected from an Academy kit and required bolts to be added to the skids and roller brackets. 2. Three grouser racks were assembled and carefully glued after lining them up on the hull. 3. The spades came from the parts box and the holders were made from soda can strip and a wing nut was added. 4. The chain block bin, vice bracket, extended towing eyes and snatch block were all added to the front hull.

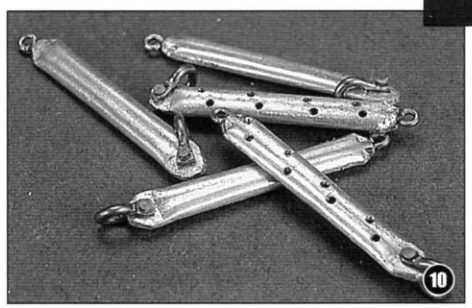


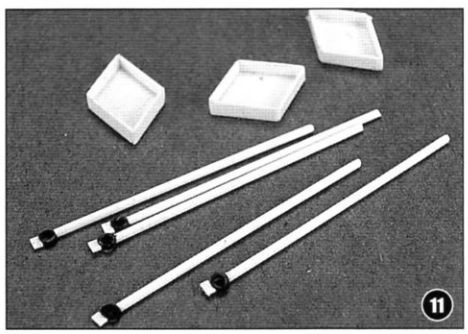


including the two at the bottom. The engine deck was separate and an engine could be added from other producers of aftermarket products. The engine deck detail included the identification plates that were welded near the fuel and water covers. The underside was well detailed and CMD even provided the two access plates on the sponsons and the correct ones for the belly of the hull. The crew hatches were separate and periscopes with hinged covers came as separate items. Excellent color reference photos and instructions were provided and the kit fell together with cyanoacrylate glue and a minutia of cleanup. Holes for tool stowage were filled with putty and lights, guards and lifting eyes came from the parts box. A vent cover with the offset screw was added near the turret cover's offside rear corner. The hull .30 Cal. was pilfered from the expansive parts box. Another kit, CMD 34 -US Vehicle WWII Pioneer Tool Set was used for some of the additional tool stowage. This was excellent in detail and casting and should be used to replace many of the poor tools provided in other plastic kits. The tools came with the straps and tie-down clips already cast, outstanding.









5. Basswood and soda can strips were used for construction of the planks and their holder. 6. The turret opening was plated over with the nicely detailed disc plate provided by Resicast for this purpose. 7. A stowage box, first aid kit and two fire extinguishers were added to the hull rear. The large stowage box contained the crew's personal equipment. 8. Details of the Academy suspension can be seen here. The CMD kit does not include these components. 9. The rear towing attachment was added below the muffler. A little putty was necessary for a good fit. 10. New earth anchors with pins and holders were fashioned from aluminum tube. 11. The holders for the anchors are seen here at the top of the photo. They were made from styrene strip. Resicast provided anchor pins their holders but they were different from my references, so new ones were made from styrene.

The running gear was selected from an Academy kit and required bolts to be added to the skids, roller brackets and four holes drilled in the front plates. Early spoke wheels and fancy sprockets were used. Two solid wheels were used for the front.

Resicast's conversion

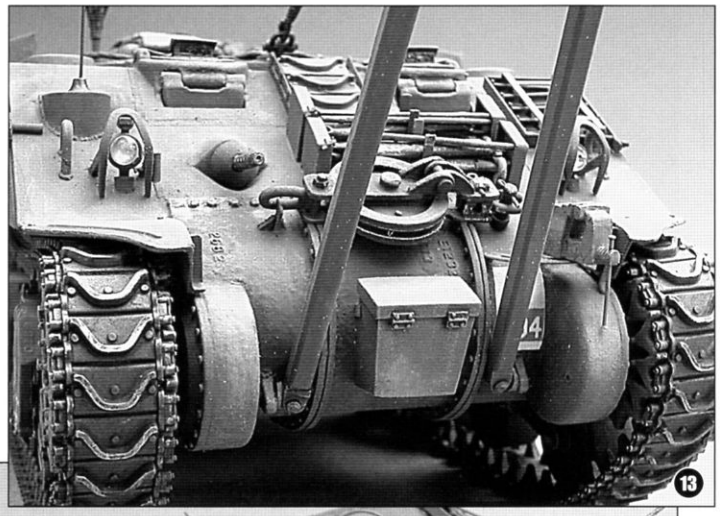
The Resicast conversion kit 35.134 ARV Mk I was also well detailed and cast in a light colored resin. It came with photo-etched parts, string, resin castings and plastic rod and beams. Instructions were well laid out and diagrams assisted with the assembly. Parts included the hull plate, grousers, earth anchors, skids, gun planks, wing nuts, Hollebone drawbars, towing attachment, tarpaulin, scrim net, snatchblock, jib and a host of other conversion parts for the Sherman V. Since this was going to be a Sherman III ARV I the instructions were not followed in the order laid out. The conversion was done by assembling parts for each side of the vehicle and finishing off with the top of the hull. This is an excellent kit and essential for any ARV conversion as many of the parts can be used on various types of ARV tanks like the Ram, Cromwell or Churchill ARV I that had similar stowage, parts and jibs.

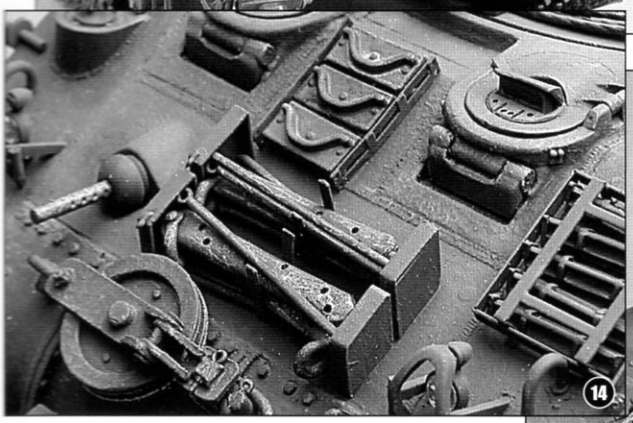
Hull front

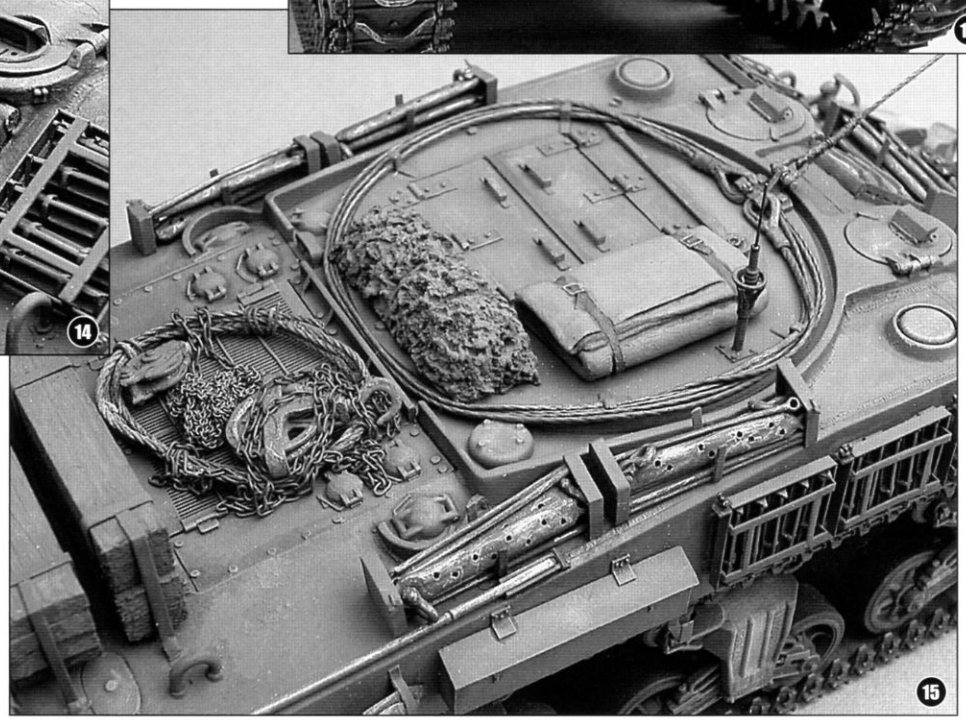
The chain block bin, vice bracket with 4.5-inch vice, extended towing eyes and snatch block with holder was all added to the hull. Vehicles with the three-piece transmission housings had an extra spacer added to the snatch block holder in order for it to clear the joints. Copper wire was bent for the rings on the 15-ton snatch block and small pins were added to detail the block. A photo-etched cage for the grousers was folded and attached to the port side. Small resin wing nuts were attached when the kit was almost complete. New holdfasts or earth anchors with pins and holders were fashioned from aluminum tube. The tube was cut to length, partially flattened, holes were drilled at an angle and ring and shackle glued in position. The holders were made from styrene strips. Resicast provided these anchors and pins in their holders but they were different from my references, so new ones were cobbled together. A base for the 'A' antenna was placed in the cast hull holder. One holdfast and eight earth spikes or pins were positioned in each holder. Two of these holders were added to the hull front. Spare tracks in photo etched holders were attached next. Lights and guards came from the spares box and two styrene tubes were added to the guards to represent the holders for the light plugs.

Outside hull

Three grouser cages or racks were assembled and carefully glued after lining them up on the hull. Some of the backing blocks for the grousers were slowly sanded until the grousers could be separated. They were then placed in the cage and secured. Other blocks of grousers were sanded but left on the backing block as the complete separation took up too much time. The supporting brackets for the jib boom were provided in the brass fret and were folded and glued in position. The Hollebone drawbar was assembled from the resin







12. The large rear stowage box contained the crew's personal equipment such as greatcoats, blankets, kits and so on. The long Hollebone draw bar was provided by Resicast. 13. A close-up showing the well cast CMD three piece transmission housing. Light lenses were from MV products. 14. On the front hull, one anchor and eight earth spikes were positioned in each holder. Spare tracks in photo etched holders were also attached. 15. This top view illustrates the large 100-ft cable wound around the hull covering with the Resicast ends attached. These were detailed with whipped ends and eye thimbles. A tie-down holder with wing nut was made from soda can strips and secured the ends of the cable.

parts and styrene rod. The drawbar hook was attached to the hull side and two small angles were added to each side from styrene strip. The holders for the jib required measuring specific distances before they were secured in their correct positions. The instructions provided measurements for proper placement.

Offside hull

Grouser cages were assembled for the starboard side, the grousers were positioned and everything secured. The pioneer toolbox was glued to the side and two spades were added. This toolbox contained the jack handles, two 10-pound sledgehammers, axe, pick and other tools. The spades came from the parts box and the holders were made from soda can strip and a wing nut was added. One of the main differences of the Sherman III was added next. This consisted of a small guide pulley and 27 ft long cable that was used to raise and lower the jib. Three bolts with guides were attached to the tank's drive sprocket. The pulley spigot was welded to the hull front and the pulley rotated on the side. The pulley was made from styrene discs and rod. Styrene hex rod was used to depict the three nuts that were welded to the offside sprocket. Resicast's instructions show a diagram of these features but did not differentiate between the Sherman V and the Sherman III fittings.

Hull top

The turret opening was plated over and Resicast provides a nicely detailed disc plate for this purpose. It comes with hinge detail, loops for securing the tarpaulin and camouflage net and cable holders for the main 100-ft cable that was wound around the top. The track spanner was added from the CMD set and was well detailed with locating ring and locking pin. The 'B' antenna base was added after most of the kit was complete.

Stowage diagrams showed a different setup for the gun planks on the Sherman III versus the Sherman V. This was probably for access to the engine. On the M4A2 there are no rear hull doors as there are on other Sherman types. The rear end displays the two radiator grills below the hull overhang and the two-section transverse muffler unit. Access to the diesel engine was through the two top deck doors. Resicast provided gun planks and skids for the M4A4 conversion and some parts were used. However, the holder and planks for the shorter skids had to be cobbled together as they were stowed vertically on the Sherman III. Basswood and soda can strips were used for construction. Four more holders for the holdfast and earth spikes were attached to the hull. Due to the angled top surface of the Sherman, little angled spacers were added to the bottom of the holders at the two forward positions. Photographic references clearly show these angles welded to the bases in order to keep the horizontal surface for the pins and anchors. The large 100-ft cable was wound around the hull covering and the Resicast ends were attached. These were detailed with whipped ends and eye thimbles. A tie-down holder with wing-nut was made from soda can strips and secured the ends of the cable.

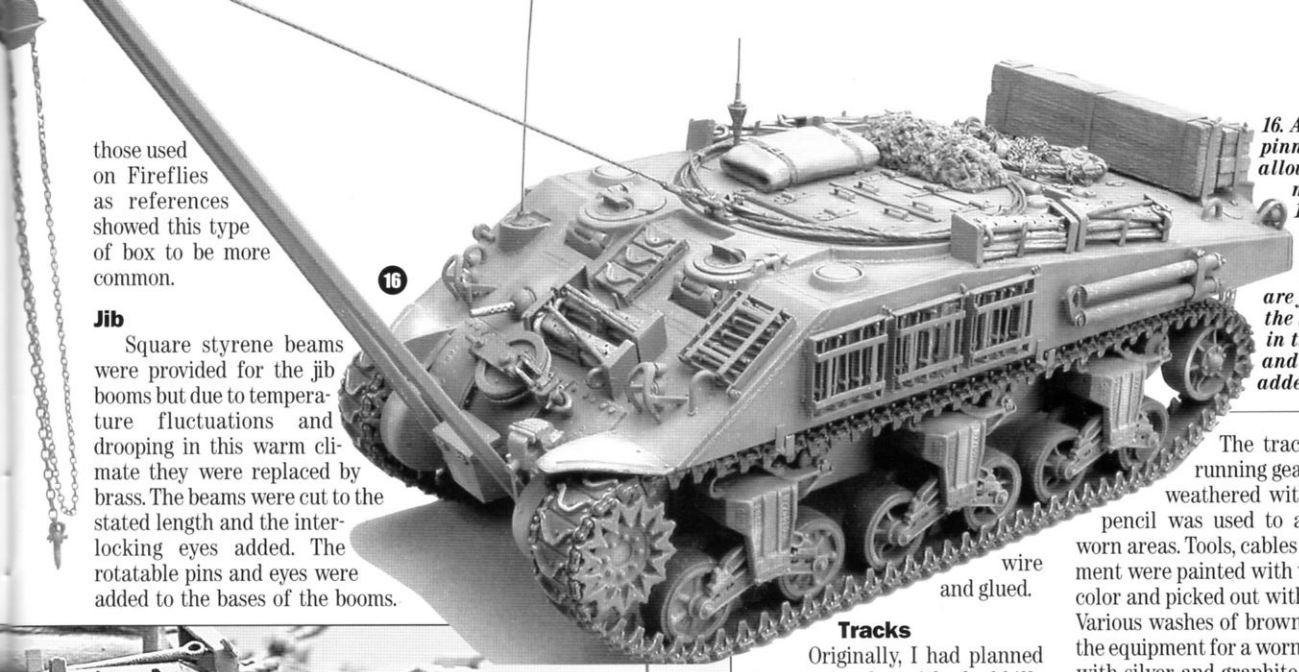
Hull rear

A stowage box, first aid kit and two fire extinguishers were added to the hull rear. The large stowage box contained the crew's personal equipment such as greatcoats, blankets, kits and so on. References showed that the methyl bromide fire extinguishers could face either in or out and were carried on both gasoline and diesel versions of the ARV. The rear towing attachment was added below the muffler and a little putty was necessary for a good fit. The long Hollebone drawbar was assembled from the four-resin parts and styrene rod provided by Resicast. If the stowage box was on the vehicle and rear fenders were present, this drawbar was secured to the rear fenders for ease of removal. If the box was absent or the vehicle's rear fenders were missing, the drawbar was secured to the brackets of the gun planks on the rear deck. Resicast's box for the intercom headphones was added to the right rear plate. A large stowage box was provided but this was changed to one similar to

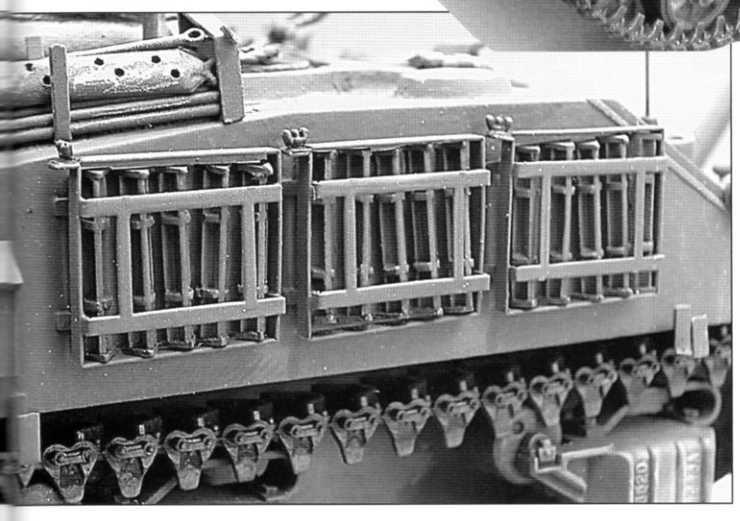
those used on Fireflies as references showed this type of box to be more common.

Jib

Square styrene beams were provided for the jib booms but due to temperature fluctuations and drooping in this warm climate they were replaced by brass. The beams were cut to the stated length and the interlocking eyes added. The rotatable pins and eyes were added to the bases of the booms.



16. All movable joints were pinned with styrene rod to allow adjustment and placement of the jib and cables. 17. My completed grouser racks on the right side of the hull. 18. Two additional anchor brackets are found on the right side of the hull. 19. A bit of clutter in the form of chains, cable and snatch blocks were added to the engine deck.



The extended and enlarged towing eyes on the hull were necessary for the booms to fit on the real vehicle. Pins for these connections were permanently secured with chains and tube holders to the transmission housing. A scale 3-Ton chain block was scratch built from styrene rod and discs and two different sizes of chain were used. One fine link chain was selected for the pull chain and another larger link one for the load chain. Hooks were added to attach the chain block to the jib and for the end of the load hoist to pick up whatever load was required during recovery or repairs. All swiveling or movable joints were pinned with styrene rod to allow adjustment and placement of the jib and cables. This allowed some flex and reduced damage if the parts were bumped, as was usually the case in my construction. Cables were made from fine nylon string, which had very few fibers sticking out, and the ends were whipped with fine copper wire and glued.

Tracks

Originally, I had planned to use tracks with duckbills which increased the surface area of the track and decreased ground pressure but time constraints forced the use of Academy's well made T62 vinyl tracks. These tracks stressed the resin tension pins so I had to drill holes and use some brass wire to strengthen the adjustable parts. In fitting the tracks, two of the brass boom holders were deployed into the land where many of my single socks have visited, so I had to cobble up replacements. Maybe they will reappear when my socks do. Not!

Painting and markings

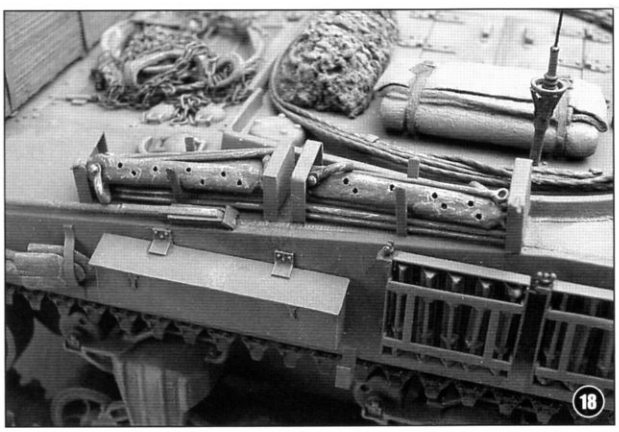
The completed kit was sprayed with Humbrol enamels and allowed to dry. I used No. 159 and No. 33 in a ratio of 8:1 for the base coat, these were the colors recommended by researchers (MAFVA) for British SCC 15, olive drab used by the British Army. An overcoat of Dullcote was added next and the kit was allowed to dry for a few days. A pin wash of black oil color and the base coat was allowed to darken recesses and any pooling of the pigments was removed with a soft cloth. The vehicle was then dry brushed with a lighter shade of the base coat. Brown earth oil color was used to lighten up the running gear area.

The tracks were replaced on the running gear and painted in steel and weathered with earth tones. A graphite pencil was used to add scratches and depict worn areas. Tools, cables and other recovery equipment were painted with various shades of the base color and picked out with colors to represent steel. Various washes of brown and black were added to the equipment for a worn aged look and highlighted with silver and graphite pencils as necessary. The ARV was finally given a light dusting with pastels and the vehicle was complete. Chain and cable together with pulleys were added to the rear deck. Light lenses were from MV products. A 12-inch and an eight-foot aerial were cut from brass wire and inserted into their appropriate sockets.

Markings depicted a Sherman III ARV I used by 8th Armoured Brigade, which had nine of these recovery vehicles around D-Day in 1944. The decals were from Accurate Armour and show the red fox's mask on yellow, over the 994 which represented the 4th /7th Royal Dragoon Guards.

This was an enjoyable conversion using two very well made kits from CMD and Resicast. The kits were simple to construct and the parts meshed well together. The small changes made were time consuming and not really necessary as most parts were sufficiently detailed and represented the equipment of a non-common ARV in war service.

—Carlos D'Arcy



MMiR RECCE

Chesapeake Model Designs M4A2 Sherman with early direct vision slots. Kit number CMD29. Suggested retail price $35.00. **American pioneer tools.** Kit number CMD34. Suggested retail price $6.00. Both items graciously provided by the manufacturer.

Resicast, Sherman ARV Mk I, Conversion. Kit number 35.134. Suggested retail price 42.00 euro. If you can't find any Resicast item, one can always write to them at 517 Vieux chemin de Binche, 7000 Mons, Belgium.

References

Allied-Axis, The Photo Journal of the Second World War, Issue 4, Ampersand Publishing Co. Florida, USA, 2001.

Profile AFV Weapons #35 -British ARVs and Wheels, Tracks & Transporters, London England, 1971.

RAOC, Chilwell Catalogue No 72/399, Sherman ARV Spares List, First Edition, UK, 1944.

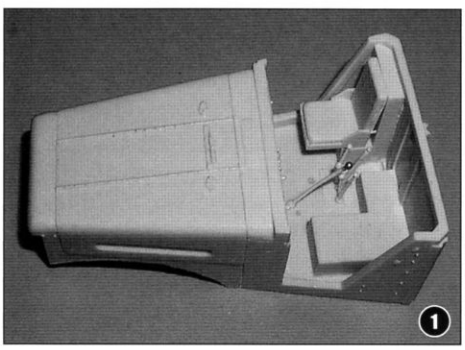
A 6 Tonner from the Past

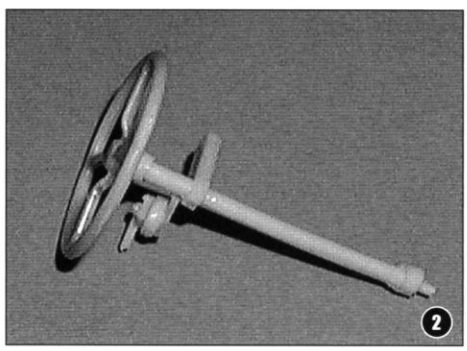
Building a P.S.P. all resin Corbitt 666 Truck

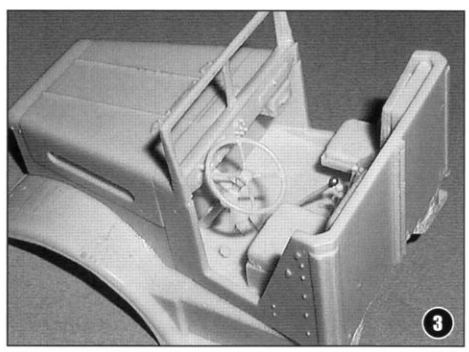
Despite the huge numbers produced by five different U.S. companies, there is very little available on this truck. The original requirement for this truck was from the coastal artillery that wanted a prime mover. The Corbitt Company built pilot models of the 6-ton 6x6 truck, or better known as the Corbitt 666, between 1939 and 1940. Once accepted, Corbitt began full production of the truck for the U.S. Army. Originally, Corbitt and White both produced this truck, which were almost identical except for the nameplate on the hood. The practice of putting nameplates on the truck was soon stopped, making it even more difficult to tell the difference externally between these two trucks. There were minor differences, like wheelbases and gear ratios, plus the data plate. The design was so successful that the combined production of both Corbitt and White could not keep up, so Brockway, FWD and Ward La France also produced the same model.

A 12.7-liter Hercules HXC six-cylinder engine initially powered the truck. There was also a 25,000-pound winch driven from the transfer box mounted behind the cab. In late 1941, a larger Hercules engine was introduced which had 202 bhp and displaced 14-liters. Along with the newer engine, the cab was changed to a more military style and in 1942 the cab, which was originally all metal, was switched to a soft top with canvas.

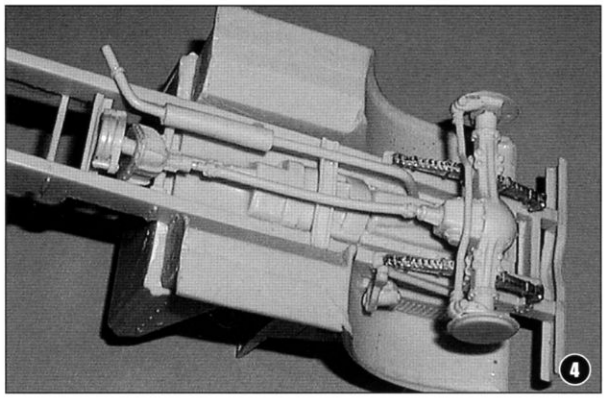
The Corbitt proved so popular, it went on to serve in many roles. These roles included a prime mover for artillery, carrying troops and carrying cargo. It was produced between 1940 and 1945, with a total production of over 21,000 of all types. The body was produced in both metal and later, wood.

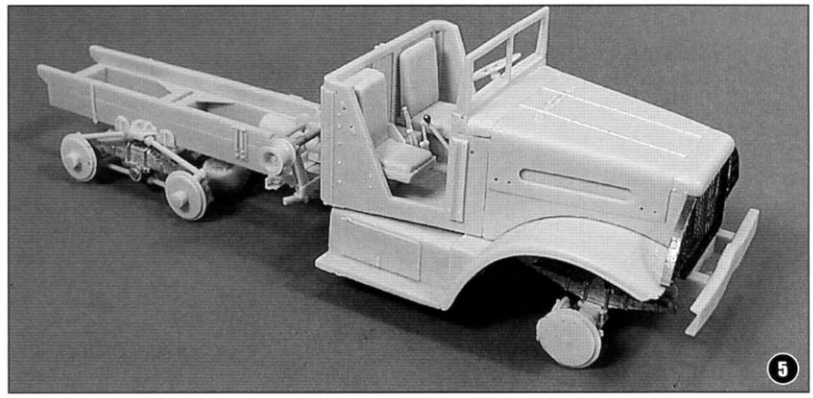


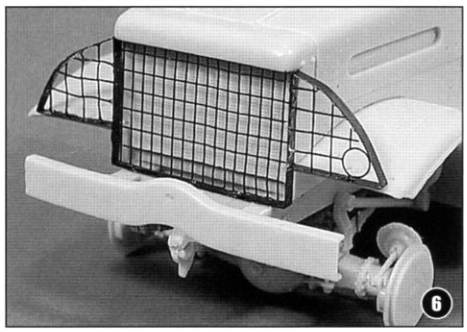


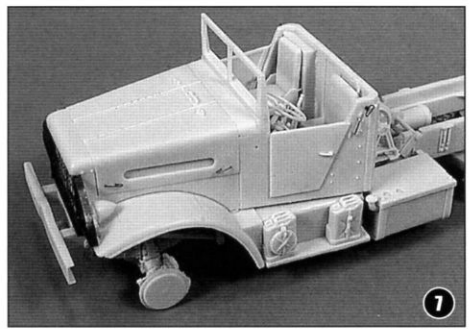


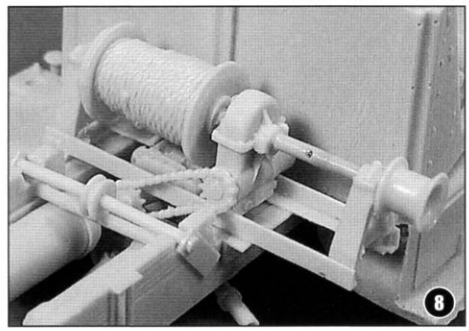
1. The basic cab is one piece, since the engine is not included. This is probably a blessing since this makes assembly a lot easier. 2. The steering wheel and shaft also included the electric braking rheostat. I thought it was a really big turn signal indicator. 3. The little box underneath the glove box is for spare parts. Both fenders were a little anemic, with small air holes all over the top.

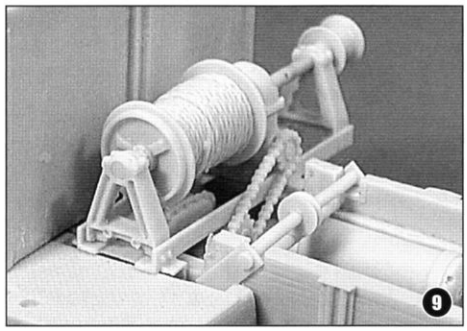


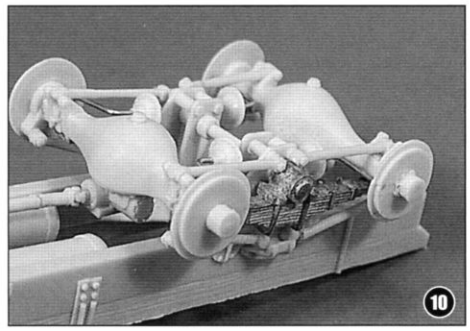


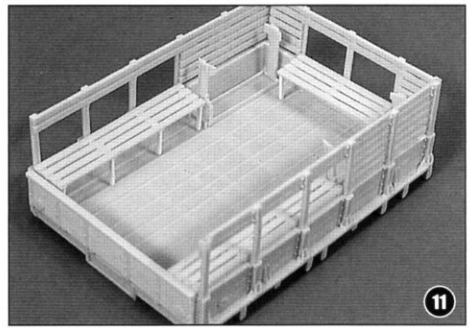












4. The front axle was not too bad, but the metal springs create problems because the resin does not glue well to them. 5. Gluing the cab to the main frame takes a little cutting, but I finally got it on right. 6. Absolutely the worst part of the kit was getting this 7-piece grill together. The biggest problem was it is very delicate. 7. The two 5-gallon cans both go on the left running board for some reason. For some of the handles I use brass wire instead of the photo-etch flat handles. 8. The winch went together without any difficulty, but the chain drive from the transfer case was another story. 9. The main gas tank did not have mount points, so you have to guess its location and the gas cap was a separate piece. 10. The rear axle was very difficult to get together. The four brake reservoirs were missing their connecting pieces so I made more out of brass wire.

Get a TM or you will be sorry

This kit consists of 137 resin pieces molded in a light beige resin, a photo-etch set of 79 parts, a chain and a few small pieces of styrene. At first glance, the resin parts are beautifully cast with only a few air holes and no real pour plugs. The instructions consist of seven pages of exploded drawings. There are no decals, but this company has taken a different approach by providing stencils on the photo-etch sheet of all the markings needed. I bought a reprinted Technical Manual on this truck from Portrayal Press to help build this kit and it proved to be a wise investment because the instructions fall way short of getting you through the construction.

Hey cab!

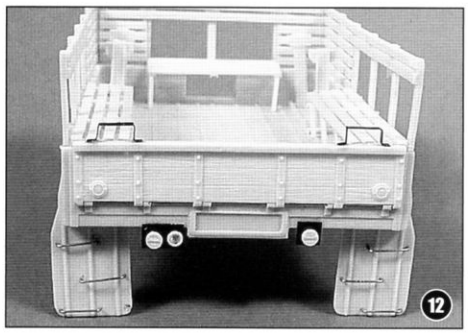
The instructions are not really a guide to steps, rather they are a series of drawings showing where everything goes, so you can't follow them, except to figure out the subassemblies. I started where I always do with trucks, the cab. This kit does not have an engine, but it has just about everything else, including a very complete interior. I cleaned up and glued all the shifts and levers in the cab using the instructions and the manual as a guide. The dashboard was glued on, along with the spare parts container, which goes underneath the glove box. The passenger's seat went in next without any problems, but the driver's seat had me scratching my head until I realized the instructions have it drawn upside down. In other words, the piece shown as the back is really the bottom. I also glued on the electric brake control on the steering wheel. I thought it was a big turn signal indicator. I then glued the windshield frame on, but left all the photo-etch parts off until after painting.

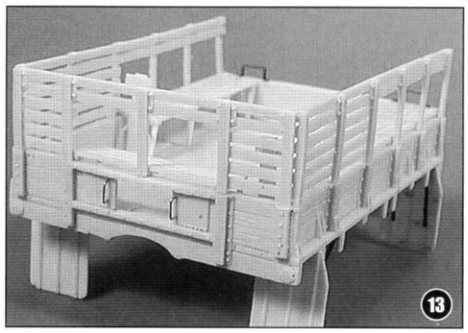
The lower section of the cab is one piece that includes the fenders. The only problem here was the rear of the boxes underneath the steps. The rears of both are very porous, with lots of large air holes, and need filling. The cab top was then glued to the bottom half.

Getting framed

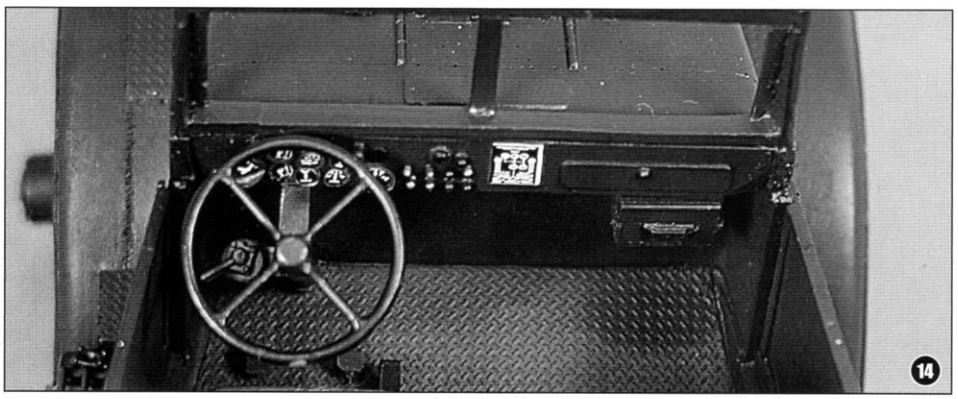
The main chassis frame was cleaned up and then the cab assembly was glued to it. I then started with the front axle by gluing on the two white metal springs. The front axle had a lot of holes, but all of them were small and luckily on the top, which would not show once in place. I glued on the two-wheel disk and attached the tie rod. The drawings are very vague on the tie rod, but it does go underneath, not over the drive shaft. Another strange thing is the drawings show two tow hooks being glued on the front underside of the frame. There are neither tow hooks nor mount points in the kit, so I guess someone had been to the pub for a pint or two while doing the drawings, or someone else just forgot these items. This would also account for some of the lines not really going anywhere close to the correct locations. The front bumper was attached and the front tow hook and mount were glued on. There is a support piece that goes on before the rest of the parts. The tail pipe and muffler were then glued on after the tail pipe was drilled out. The transfer case was added, but unfortunately, the long drive shaft was a little too short, so I glued on a short extension. There are two air reservoirs that go on the inside, just behind the transfer case. Again, the instructions are really vague here so the manual saved me.

The rear axle mounts were assembled and attached to the frame. The white metal springs were then glued on. There are no location marks where the rear axles go, but after trial and error I found you need to glue them at the very ends of the springs. I also would like to mention that the fit of





11. The hardest part of the bed was cutting out between all the boards. The seats can either be raised or lowered. I chose lowered since it cluttered up the bed more. 12. The taillights all had photo-etch mounts. I hollowed out the smaller one for an MV lens. 13. The sliding doors in the front of the bed can be either open or closed. I chose open so the wire from the handles would not show through. 14. The new Fingerprint Design US interior decals are great. Here you can see the dials I used, plus the shift pattern data plate. 15. The driver is a Warriors figure. I could not get his left arm to hold the steering wheel so I added a wine bottle. Drinking and driving on the Red Ball Express? 16. The rear view mirrors were left off until last for obvious reasons. I did not use the kit arms because they were just too weak. Instead, I used telescoping brass tubing for the arms.



the rear springs and axles is not very good. I had to do some fiddling to get everything square and level. There are four brake reservoirs on the rear, but my kit apparently was missing the connecting pieces, so I made new ones from brass wire.

Grilling problems

The front grill is all photo-etch and is a bear to get together. The parts are mislabeled, with # 3 and # 2 reversed, so watch out. I bent the frames, #4, then glued in the two end pieces. The hardest part of the kit was getting these puppies together. After several false starts, I finally got together the two side pieces protecting the headlights. I then glued the photo-etch piece, #5, to the top underneath the hood and one to the bottom on the frame. I then glued the main grill to the top one first, then to the bottom one. I used a spacer to keep the grill away from the radiator until it dried. Last, I glued the two end pieces on.

The winch was cleaned up and then assembled and mounted on the chassis. I had trouble getting the power takeoff from the transfer case to the chain drive, but finally managed to get it to look reasonable. The fuel tank spout was glued onto the tank, then the tank was glued to the frame. The pioneer tools were cleaned up and the shovel glued in its place, then mounted to the frame using spacer pieces furnished with the kit.

My bed was not all roses

The biggest problem with the bed was the side panels. They are a lot of work to clean up, because all the spaces between the boards need to be cut out. These sideboards were then glued on around the sides. The tailgate was also glued on, along with the spare tire supports. I left the spare tires off until after painting. I decided to have all the bench seats down to give the bed more clutter. I followed the instructions and cut out 10mm legs for the benches from the furnished styrene. I then glued on the four mudguards and added the photo-etch supports. The two rear mudguards have steps on them and I substituted brass wire for the kit supplied photo-etch. The taillights' photo-etch mounts were glued on and the three taillights were added. I drilled out the one circular one that I wanted for a red MV lens. I decided to leave the bed off the truck until most of the painting was complete to make it easier.

I now went back to the cab and added the photo-etch and brass wire to various places, including the inside of the two doors. I then glued the doors on.

The bridge classification disk was added for color. I cut out a circle from very thin sheet metal then sprayed it using the kit stencil.

Left: The stars and large registration numbers are from Archer's dry transfer sets. The kit did include these as photo-etch masks, but the surfaces were too rough to do right. Below: The red reflectors were first painted white, then gloss red enamel. The steps on the rear mud flaps were made from brass wire. The star was also from Archer. A quick base was made from a Tamiya cobble street sheet.

There are two 5-gallon gas cans that go on the running board of the left side, which I glued on. I also added the headlights. I was missing one of the two marker lights for the front fenders, so I substituted some from my spares box.

Doing the final stuff, like painting

First, it was given a good washing with warm soapy water. I then sprayed on a base coat of Tamiya XF-1 flat black to serve as pre-shading and allow me to check for holes in the resin. I then lightly sprayed the truck with Tamiya XF-62 olive drab. The stencils were next. I never have had much luck with metal stencils and this was no exception. The trick is they have to be flush against the object or you are going to get under spray making the numbers fuzzy. After trying several times, I gave up on the numbers on the side of the hood and the stars on the hood and the rear. Instead, I used my favorite Archer dry transfers. Woody makes a nice set of white stenciled registration numbers and great white stars. I used both of these and put Solvaset on them to get them to lay flat. For the bumpers, I used the kit stencil sets with great success. I found it was easier to hold the stencil in the correct location, then tape it down. I then masked off the rest of the truck with a sheet of paper with a hole cut in the center just big enough for the stencil. I lightly sprayed with a barely thinned Tamiya flat white paint. I then took a hair dryer and dried the area before removing the stencil. I also used the new Fingerprint Designs US internal stenciling set for decals for the dashboard and all the instruments. I really am glad someone finally came up with these decals. They even include the shift pattern plate.

The details were then painted on the truck, including the tools and seat covers in the cab. I also sprayed the canvas cab with Polly Scale Soviet khaki. No real reason for the color, except it looked good and I had it handy. I then sprayed the whole truck with a Polly Scale mix of flat and satin clear to seal everything before weathering began.

I used a Warriors Universal G.I. Driver WWII figure, which went into the driver's seat without much effort. After cleaning him up and gluing his arms on, I painted his face and hands with oil paints and his uniform with Vallejo acrylic paints.

I then weathered the cab interior so I could put the figure in it. I first gave it a wash of very thin black oil paint, then dry brushed it with various oils. The windshields were then assembled using the photo-etch parts, which had been painted on their fret. Since there was no clear acetate for the windshields provided in the kit, I cut out pieces of glass using the PBL glass kit, which consists of a scriber and .006 1"x1" pieces of glass. I cut out the two rectangular pieces of glass and glued them to the photo-etch frames, #6. I then glued the windshields on the truck and added the windshield wipers, #8. There are frame supports, #7, which go on either side of the frames to allow the windshields to be raised. I decided not to do this because I discovered the frames were too wide. The supports are not to scale and too big, so it would have been a problem getting them to look right. Instead, I just glued them inside the windshield. I now glued the figure in and the canvas top was added.

The bed was then glued on and then I gave the whole truck a wash of the same black oil paint. I then lightly sprayed the lower portion of the truck with Tamiya flat earth and dry brushed with various oil paints. The MV lenses were glued in, including L185 for the headlights and LS 200 for the smaller red taillight.

I decided the front looked a little plain, so I made a road/bridge classification disk. The photo-etch set included a stencil for two different ones. I cut out a small, circular piece of thin metal and sprayed it with yellow paint. Then, using the 35/16 stencil, I sprayed it black.

What's next?

This turned out to be a really tough kit to build. It looks great in the box, but, of course, the proof, as always, comes from the actual building. As is normal with resin kits, the instructions are very poorly done and even though there are a number of exploded views, the lines showing where things go are very haphazard and often are just plain wrong. The TM saved me a lot of mistakes and answered a lot of questions and I feel it is a necessary reference to build this truck. Unfortunately, I have another kit of the P.S.P. Brockway bridge truck to build and it has the same basic chassis. The good news is the resulting kit does not look too bad. It would never win any contests, but still, this little known, but important truck is an interesting addition to any collection.

—Jim Hensley

MMiR RECCE

P.S.P.: Corbitt 6-Ton 6x6 Truck. Kit number 35035. Kit gracoiusly provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price $160.00

Warriors Scale Models Universal G.I. Driver WWII. Kit number 35278. Suggested retail $12.95.

References

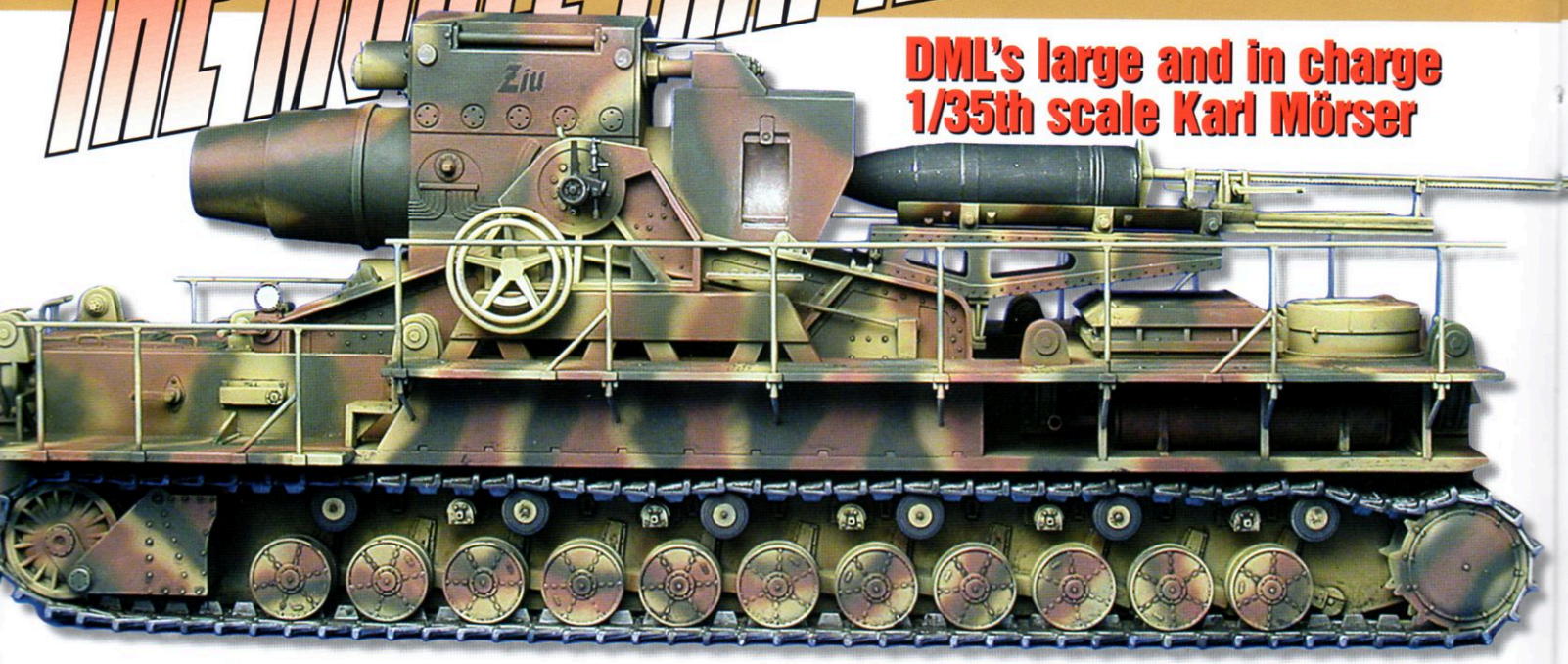
6-Ton, 6x6 Truck (White, Corbitt, and Brockway), War Department Technical Manual TM 9-813, War Department, February 1944, Portrayal Press, P.O. Box 1190N Andover, N.J. 07821 U.S.A. http://www.portrayal.com/ You have got to get this one.

Georgano, G.N. *World War Two Military Vehicles – Transports & Halftracks*, Osprey Automotive, UK, 1998 ISBN: 1 85532 406 7. Only a little information here.

LOOK OUT! IT IS:

THE MODEL THAT ATE DETROIT

DML's large and in charge 1/35th scale Karl Mörser



Where does the Karl-Gerät park? Apparently, anywhere he wants! (Thank you very much, I'll be here all week—please, tip your waitresses) The Karl-Gerät was a heavy siege weapon designed to reduce large fortifications, such as the French Maginot Line. The weapon was known as Karl-Gerät after General Karl Becker, head of its evaluation committee. It was also known as Gerät 040 and also answered to "hey you."

It was unique among heavy mortars of its time, not only for its freakin' huge size, but also in its method of locomotion. The entire mortar was encased in a large steel rectangle that was fully tracked and motorized. The Gerät 040 could move into position under its own power at around four miles per hour. Once in position, the entire firing platform was lowered to the ground, also using an onboard engine, in a scant 15 seconds. The gun was mounted opposite the direction of travel, so it could beat feet quickly in the case of counter battery fire. The gun tube length of the Karl-Gerät was just over five meters. The gun could elevate between 55 and 70 degrees, but could only be traversed 4 degrees. Larger adjustments meant moving the entire vehicle. Look out!

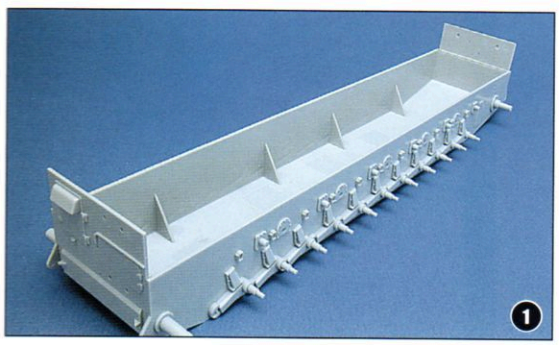
Two types of ammunition were available for the Karl-Gerät, a 2.5 meter, 2.2 metric ton "schwere" shell and a 1.9 meter, 1.7 metric ton "leichte" shell. The larger round was a "Betongranate," or concrete piercing shell and was filled with 280 kg of explosives. Nine different charges were available for either shell type and, for example, with charge 4 in place the concrete piercing shell could achieve a muzzle velocity of 220 meters per second. The Betongranate concrete piercing shell could penetrate up to 2.5 meters of concrete. A good crew could maintain a rate of fire of one round every ten minutes. To sum it up in a nutshell, it worked.

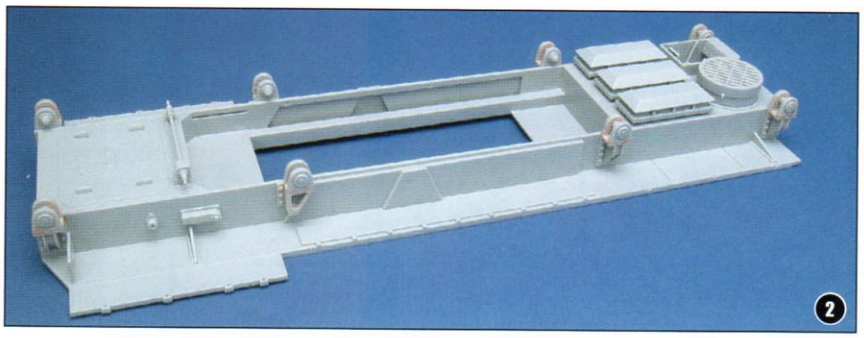
Two different types of suspension were used on the Karl-Gerät. Guns I and II used a eight-wheeled, rubber rimmed configuration, while guns III through VI used 11 steel wheels on each side. These two configurations also differed in the track type and pitch, the torsion bars and the drive sprockets. Two different engines were used in the production of the Karl-Gerät, both gasoline and diesel.

Only seven Gerät 040 were built and only six of those were fielded. Production ran from January through August 1941. The seventh gun was retained as a test vehicle and was not issued to the troops. The individual guns were known by their production numbers, expressed in Roman numerals, I-VII.

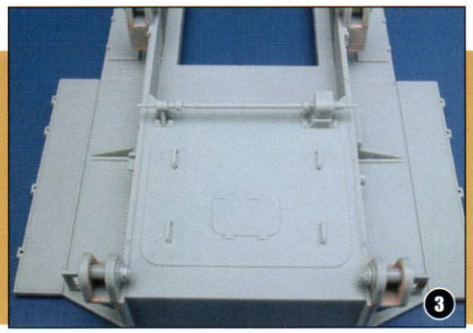
Oh, I forgot—the model

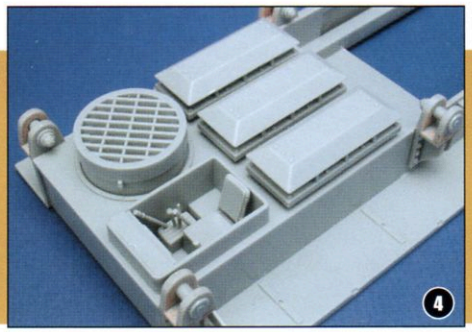
You know, I truly never thought I'd see the day. The day that we'd have a Karl in plastic. If you stop and think about it, it's way more than amazing, it's, it's—well, it's pretty darned cool. And, if that's not enough, three different manufacturers have announced a total of three different kits! But let's not get into that here. DML beat everybody to the punch and I'm here to tell you all about it.

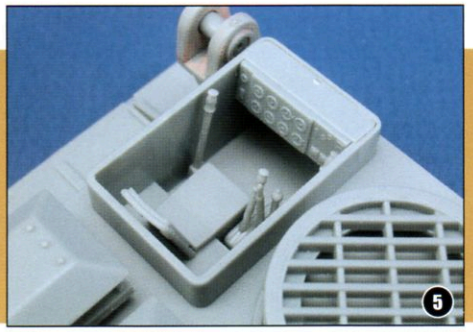


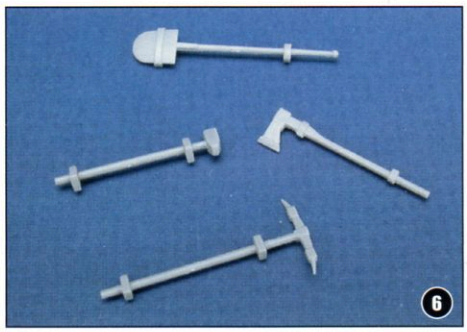


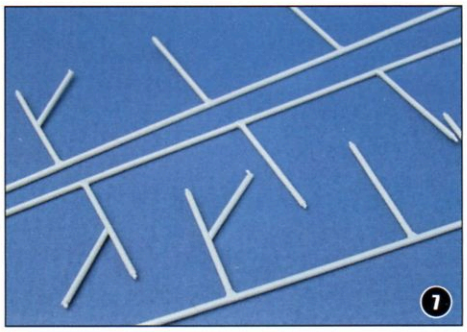
1. Ahoy there! Man, that's some hunk 'o hull. The only parts added at this point are the front and rear panels. 2. Ditto on the top hull. Although several of the various detail parts have been added, this is basically what comes in the box.

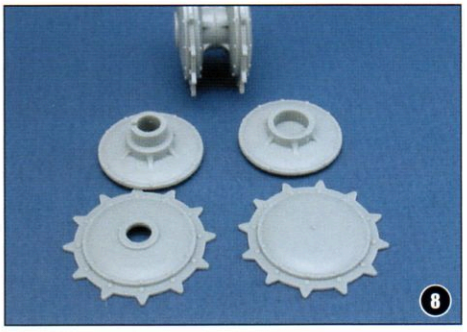


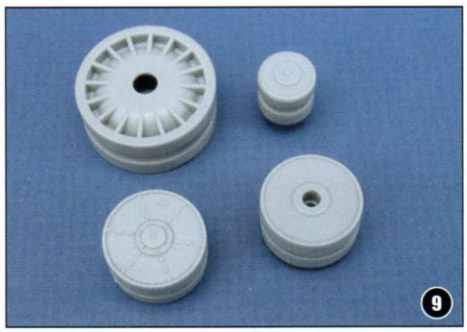


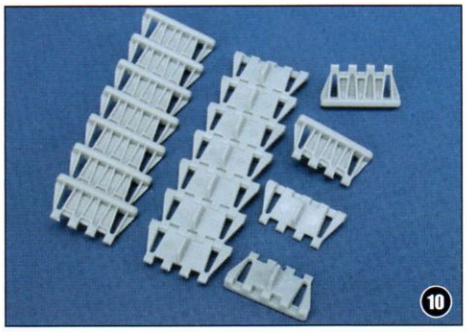












3. This is the front, if you're loading the gun. If you're driving, it's the back—whatever, it looks nice. 4. The driver's "cockpit" and the large engine vents. This is where the crew stands when operating the gun. 5. A closer look at the cockpit. 6. The pioneer tools provided. 7. These are the various railings. There is a temptation to replace them, but the thickness is just about exact. 8. The massive drive sprocket is a multi-part assembly that even includes interior bracing. 9. Clock-wise from upper left: the idler wheel, one of the return rollers and the inside and outside of a roadwheel. 10. The tracks are link and length. These are two of the shorter sections and some of the loose links. 11, 12. The first of several large sub assemblies, the main gun carriage.

The kit comes packed in a really huge box, in fact it's so huge that it comes with a separate outside cardboard sleeve to contain the artwork and other info. Once inside, you'll quickly notice that this is a Texas sized model. Not only are the sprues (11 in total) of large proportion, but the lower hull is molded in a single piece that is a good 16 inches long.

Construction starts with this piece of über plastic. Basically, you just stick on the front and rear panels. The instructions call for adding the la dders on either end at this stage, but I thought it prudent to leave them off until later. As mentioned, the real Karl could move up and down on its suspension to fire and move. DML has rendered the suspension arms in the lowered position and they are integral to the hull. I should also mention that the version of the suspension DML chose is the later, steel-wheeled type seen on guns III through VI.

Due to the molded on arms, this stage of construction moves along pretty quickly. The roadwheels themselves are real basic, no poly caps. No working suspension here!

Beware the drive sprockets. It is possible to confuse the inner sections, parts G5 and G6. This would result in a plugged shaft that doesn't fit over the mounting arms (and I think we all know how painful that can be). There is sort of a box that installs behind each idler wheel, too. This is connected to the idler with an arm (C5). With care, the wheel can be left to rotate for painting, just don't apply glue to the wide end of the arm.

The tracks are next and they are provided as link and length. You get a couple of very long lengths, several sections of seven links and 80 of the individual links. I was hoping to be able to construct the tracks and still be able to lift them off for painting, but this is just not possible. They are just too darn long and sit too close to the hull and suspension components.

I used the longer lengths for both the top and bottom runs. I did attempt to bend the top runs a little to represent the jumbled look of the Karl's collapsed suspension. The seven-link sections were used to extend the longer ones on the bottom and the individual links went around the sprocket and idler. It is not possible to use all the single links across the top; there are not enough of them.

Also be careful when passing over the drive sprocket and idler. Due to their size, it is easy to tilt the links in these areas.

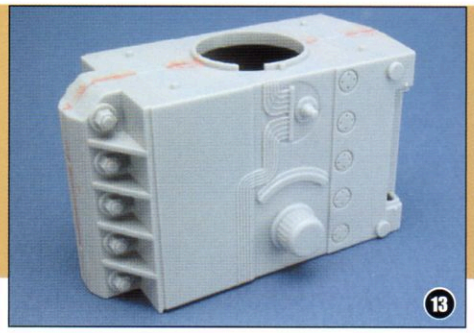
I finished each side using slow drying Tamiya ultra-thin cement, keeping the model on a nice, flat surface while it all dried. Amazingly, both the suspension and the tracks turned out perfectly level and flat.

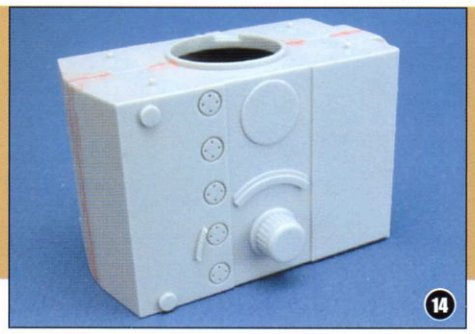
I did notice that the track castings themselves are slightly simplified. Each link should have a small hole (or deep dimple) in the guide horn and there is also no suggestion of pin detail on either side.

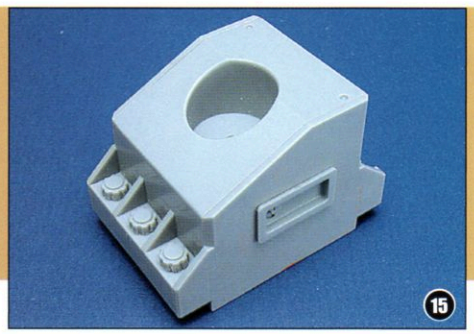
Climbing Mount Karl

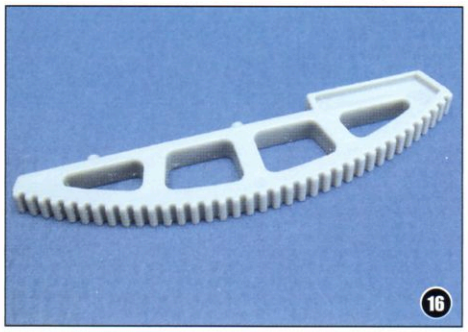
Not only is the model long, it's tall, too. The upper hull is next and it starts out with another huge hunk 'o styrene. Part A1 encompasses the entire upper hull, including the engine deck and fenders. This creates an interesting multi-layered effect on the model later. The main part of the mortar box is formed at this stage also by the addition of two more large parts, B1 and B2. The final aspect of this is the installation of the mortar carriage support girders.

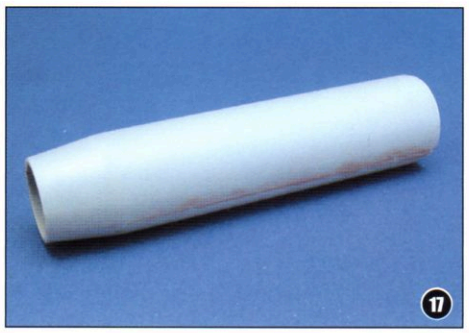
Construction also calls for the assembly and installation of the mortar carriage at this stage. However, I built it as a subassembly, as much of it sits down in the mortar box when finished.

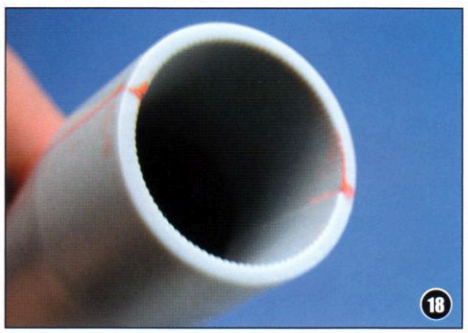


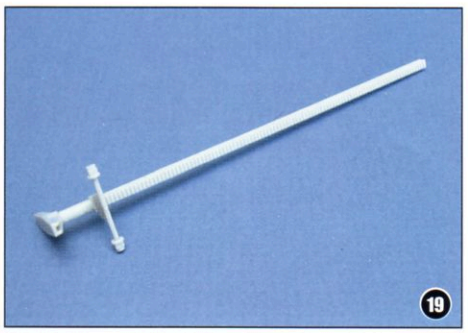


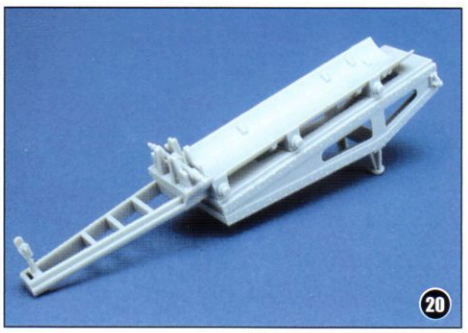












13, 14. This is the main housing for the mortar. The only major glitch in the kit is the molded-on hydraulic lines seen in photo 13. 15. This big 'ol hunk 'o plastic is the breech. The Karl used a sub-breech on the left side to accept the charge for the shell. 16. This geared girder installs under the mortar housing. 17. The main gun barrel. 18. The interior is rifled, but the seam was a bear. 19. This geared shaft is the shell-ramming device. 20. The shell cradle sub assembly. 21. Please don't put this in your carry-on luggage! A super-looking turned aluminum round is provided in the kit. 22. Karl lives! The left hand side of the mortar. Oddly, the sight for the Karl was the same one used on the 10.5cm gun. The large hand wheel is kinda cool looking. 23. I painted the driver's gauges black and picked out the details with white paint. 24. The cradle and shell in place, and the operating platform ready to go. This model is a diorama in itself. 25. The rear (front?) pioneer tools installed and painted. 26. A closer look at my three-tone scheme on the mortar housing.

From this point, it is mostly a matter of adding all the small detail parts. Various handles, gauges, linkages and shackles are added, along with the driver's position. This includes a nice little seat, hand controls and a gauge panel. Interestingly, the real Karls used a sheet metal cap to cover the driver's station and this is included in the kit as a single piece.

The main work platforms are next and, again, we are talking about some humongous pieces of plastic. The parts in question are both labeled C3 and I used my large X-acto plastic clamps to ensure a good, tight fit. This is also important for the fit of their many lower support braces, parts C1. I went ahead and added all these while the platforms were still clamped.

The instructions call for the installation of the extensive railing system now, but I decided to leave them off until the very last minute. The molding on the railing is actually pretty respectable. The real ones were fairly beefy and I would say the thickness of the DML parts is just about right. One negative point is that the joints for the rails lack any kind of detail.

With the rails placed aside for now, I went and installed the entire upper hull to the lower hull. It fit like a dream (I did finally did those ladders now).

Mörser madness: the gun and the shell cradle

Both the gun and the cradle on this beast were significant in size and its no surprise that this represents about a third of the kit. The shell cradle alone is 17 parts. It goes together beautifully and has some impressive rivet detail along its side girders. Yes, I said "girders." The round did weigh 2.2 metric tons after all! I was also impressed with the rammer assembly. It is complete with handles and gears. One odd thing here: the cradle is only supported on the model by two legs. On the real Karl, the mortar carriage also supported it. The mounting points are present on both parts in the kit, but the actual links are nowhere to be found. Perplexing.

Once the cradle was complete, it was set aside as another subassembly.

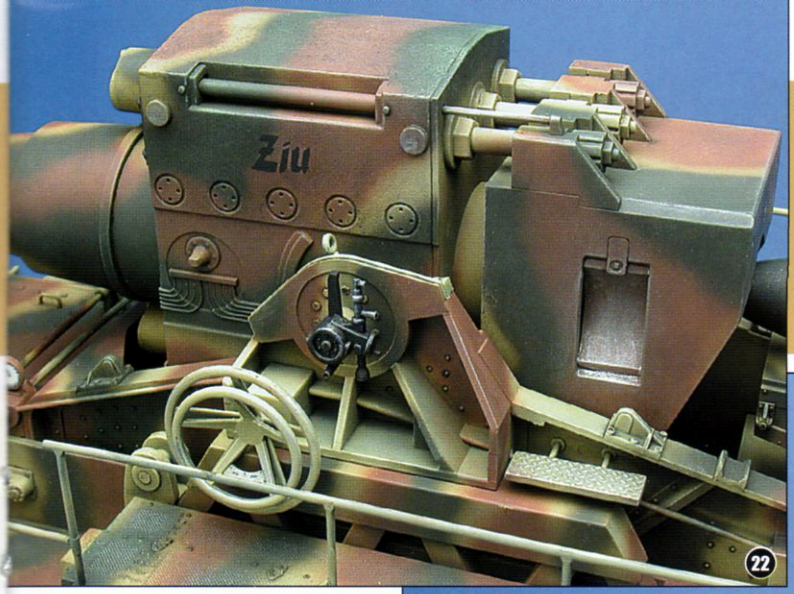
The mortar itself is another multi-part assembly composed of a whopping twenty-eight parts. Assembly starts with the breech end and a two-piece inner barrel that slides in to meet the inside of the breech opening (it's molded closed). This inner barrel is the business part of the mortar and it contains rifling detail for about an inch of its length. Unfortunately, this is marred by the fact that it is two halves. It's almost impossible to fill the seam without destroying the rifling detail.

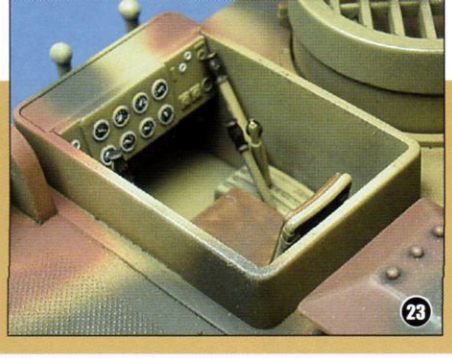
The back of the main housing is added to the front of the breech and two metal springs are included to provide the proper spacing between the breech and the housing. It's kind of hard to explain, but the housing contains six styrene support rods and the springs go onto two of them. Hard to explain, but it works!

The main, square-shaped mortar housing is just two large parts, the outer barrel sleeve and the recuperator rod termination points. A short section of brass tubing is provided (pre-cut) to receive a plastic actuator rod on the breech. A clever touch! When complete, this slips over the inner barrel and gets glued to the breech assembly.

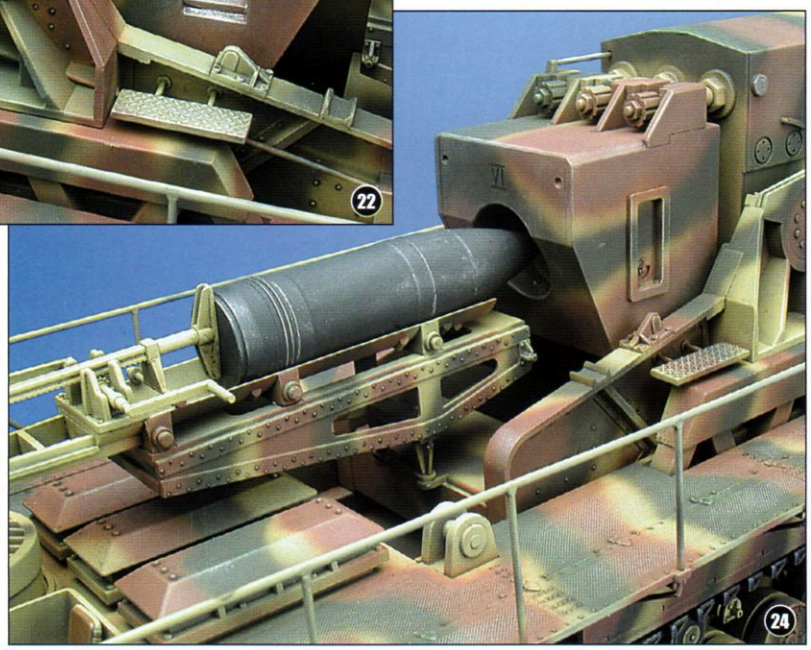
On the real Karl, the mortar housing was a very rough, cast part. DML has given it some texture, but it could use some more, if you're inclined. I filled and sanded the seam across the top and then re-textured it using Gunze Mr. Surfacer. You should still be able to see the difference in the photos.

The last things added were the railings and the main gun sight. This latter item is added on the left side of the mortar carriage. Believe it or not, this is the same Rblf36 sight used on many other German self-propelled guns, such as the Wespe and the Hummel. I guess azimuth is azimuth, no matter the size of the gun.





(27, 28, next page) 27. I applied a bit more texture to the top of the mortar housing after filling a seam there. The texture throughout the housing of the real Karl was very rough. 28. The tracks were painted on the model due to their very close fit to the hull.



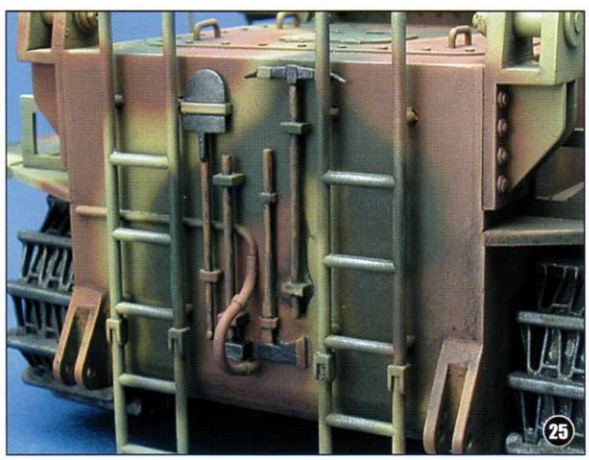
What I ended up with for painting was the following subassemblies: the completed lower hull, the carriage, the shell cradle, the mortar and the two inner mortar trunion caps (C15).

Oh, and one last thing: I noticed four parts left over on the sprues, but no mention of them in the instructions. These are parts E6 through 9 and they form the inside of the tow shackles located at the four corners of the lower hull. Go figure.

Oh and honey? Get me a couple of extra bottles of Dunkel Gelb, will ya?

Because of the small number of guns produced, it is possible to trace the paint and markings of individual guns. I decided to depict my gun as Karl-Gerät Number VI "Ziu," firing on Warsaw during the late summer of 1944. This is one of two schemes provided in the kit. Karl-Gerät Number VI was part of Heeres Artillerie Batterie (bo) 638 at that time.

All of the Karl-Gerät carried names based on Norse mythological characters. "Ziu" appears to be a Germanized version of "Ziw," the Norse god of war and the lawgiver of the gods. My research also showed the name as "Tiw" or "Tyr." FYI, Ziu was later one of the guns deployed in the west during the Battle of the Bulge, but it ended its career in Russian hands and is now on display at the Kubinka Russian Armor Museum. This was, no doubt, the basis for the kit.



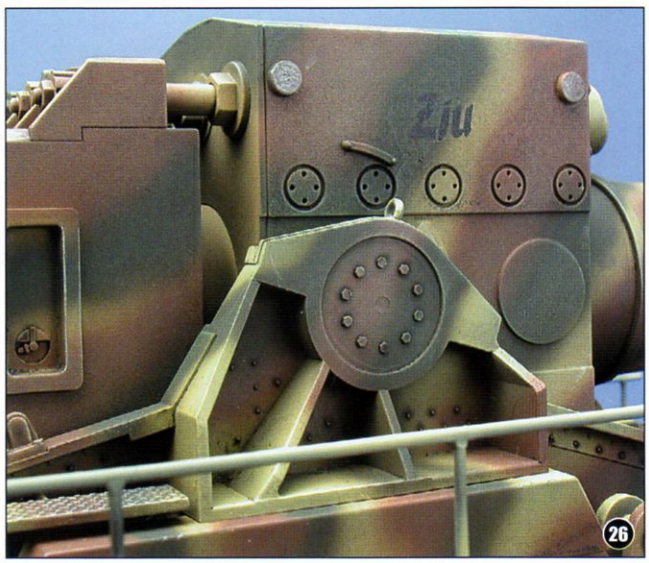
At the time of its heroic action against Polish civilian apartment buildings, Number VI was decked out in a three-tone scheme of dark yellow, green and brown. There are some nice, clear pictures of this gun bopping around (see below) and I was able to discern a very thickly applied three-color scheme. So much of the green and brown had been applied that the remaining dark yellow appeared in bands very similar to the other two colors.

I started with an overall base of black (XF-1). This model will take a lot of paint, so make sure to have enough on hand. I was careful to give everything a good hit of the black. I do this as part of my weathering process and the idea is to give the model extra depth and shadow. Deeply recessed areas will later receive very little or no additional color. I then created my base color coat using Tamiya Dark Yellow. This was immediately followed by the other two colors applied in wide bands. All of the subassemblies were camouflaged separately.

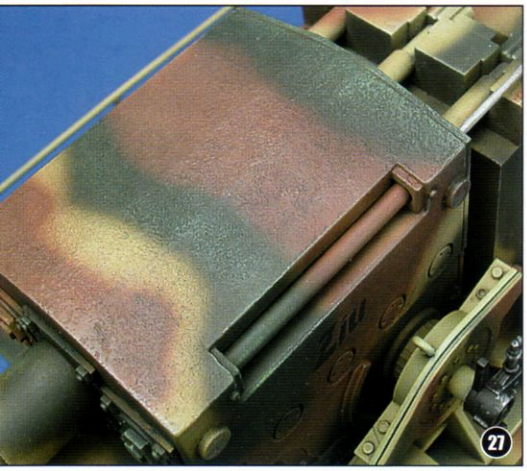
The tracks were very carefully painted with Vallejo Gun Metal. Later in the weathering process, they were given several dark washes of black oil paint. Carefully applied, this has the effect of making them look as though they have been drybrushed, virtually impossible given the proximity of the tracks to the hull.

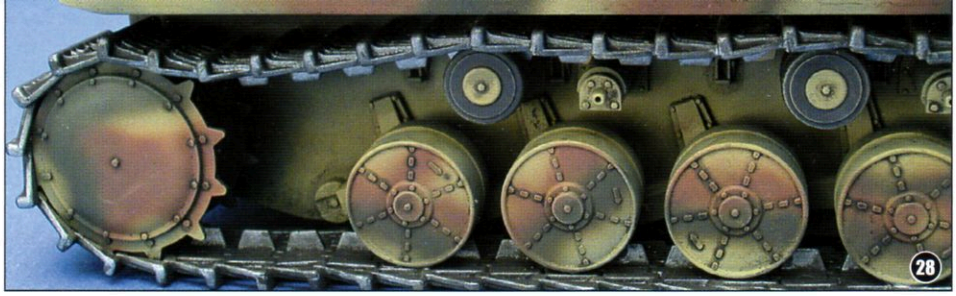
The two areas to receive decals were lightly coated with Tamiya clear. The name "Ziu" appears on either side of the mortar housing and the Roman number VI appears on the top of the breech. DML only provides the one set of numerals, but they actually appear on every separate component of the vehicle.

The weathering started with a thin wash of black and burnt sienna oil paint. Once again, the size of the model presented special challenges. I applied the wash to all the subassemblies, but had to apply it in two stages on the lower hull. First, the area from the fenders down was done. Then the next day, the area above the fenders was completed. This kept me from handling the moist model and wrecking the finish.



Drybrushing was done with lighter shades of all three colors selected from the Vallejo line. Extensive metalizing of the mortar was accomplished with Berol Prismacolor pencils, silver and metallic gray. This was carefully worked into the finish with a finger (mine, actually). Other metallic highlights were added by drybrushing Polly-Scale Metallic Pewter. Several light coats of Vallejo Flat finished up the kit.





about a lot of kits out there.

I actually find the detailing prospect somewhat exciting (however, bear in mind that I sometimes still get excited about paint). I'm sure Eduard and Aber are just around the corner and I have already seen aluminum barrels and even an early suspension conversion on the web.

The perfect kit? Well, maybe. A good, sound value and a boatload of fun? Definitely.

—Pat Stansell

Whew!

Wow, that was some project! This model took a fair amount of time to construct simply due to its size. I was pleasantly surprised by the fact that there were no significant construction or fit issues anywhere on the kit. Everything fit great and only minor filling was needed and that was only on the large front and rear lower hull panels.

I think the most noticeable weak point of the kit is that much of it has been simplified. Certain details are present, while others are missing altogether. However, I'm not sure if I see this as a criticism. The Karl was an amazingly complex machine. Clearly, in order to make a model like this accessible to everybody, some limits need to be set. On balance, I would say that DML has gauged those limits wisely. There is enough detail present to intrigue the novice and enough missing to intrigue the advanced modeler to add more. You can't say that

MMiR RECCE

Dragon 60cm Mörser "Karl" Gerät 040. Kit number 6179. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price $65.00.

References

Waffen Revue, Number 20, April-May, 1976, Der 60 cm Mörser "Karl" (Gerät 040) genannt "THOR," part I by Karl Pawlas. *Waffen Revue, Number 21, June-August, 1976, Der 60 cm Mörser "Karl" (Gerät 040) genannt "THOR,"* part II by Karl Pawlas. *Waffen Revue, Number 22, September-November, 1976, Der 60 cm Mörser "Karl" (Gerät 040) genannt "THOR,"* part III by Karl Pawlas. *Waffen Revue, Number 23, December 1976-February 1977, Der 60 cm Mörser "Karl" (Gerät 040) genannt "THOR,"* part IV by Karl Pawlas. Very tough to find, but still in print, this German language magazine covers the whole story of the weapon in text and photos.

Bertha's Big Brother Karl-Geraet (60cm) & (54 cm) The Super-heavy Self-Propelled Mortar also known as Geraet 040/041 Nr. I – VII by Thomas L. Jentz, Panzer Tracts, 2001. ISBN 0-9708407-2-1. The next best thing to the Waffen Revue series and in English to boot. Tommy boy takes on the whole story with some whopping good photos.

Allied-Axis, The Photo Journal of the Second World War, Issue number 9, Karl-Gerät at the Front by Patrick Stansell. Ampersand Publishing Co., Inc, 2003. Um, I wrote this and if you don't buy it and say its good, I'll cry. No really, 26 awesome, large archival images of the weapon in the field, including many of "Ziu" in Warsaw. Also includes two good shots of the Panzer IV Munitionsschlepper. Lots of close-ups, too.

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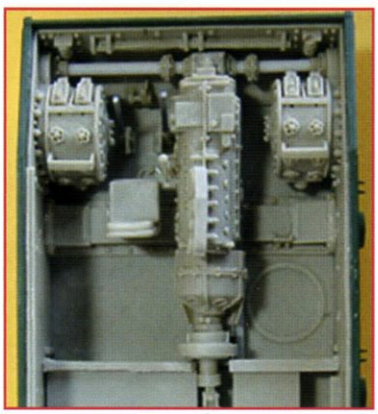

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Euro 2002

Our brief look at last year's gold medal winners in armor at Europe's top show

Euro Militaire, once regarded as the world's most significant figure competition, is looking more and more "armorish" these days. This is a sampling of the 2002 show's gold medal winners in armor. Apologies to those whose names we were not able to mention. 1. This Jagdtiger by P. Stufeinska was highly effective in reproducing the late war feel of these large vehicles. Note the primer color of the gun travel lock. 2. Although it was a common model at the

show, Mario Eens still managed to set his Marder III apart with a very well rendered finish. 3. Some of you may recognize the distinctive camouflage scheme of this March '45 production Tiger II. There is at least one good quality photo of it circulating now in print. This modeler rendered it with a crewman and also provided a color photo of the abandoned vehicle to display with the model. Cool! 4. Spanish modeler Jorge Lopez presented this handsome rendi-

tion of an LVTA2. It featured a large number of rebuilt and scratch built components. 5. This T-34/76 in a winter scheme has very realistic weathering around its undercarriage. Very appropriate for a winter vehicle. 6. Note the very convincing cant of the wheels on this beautifully finished Puma.

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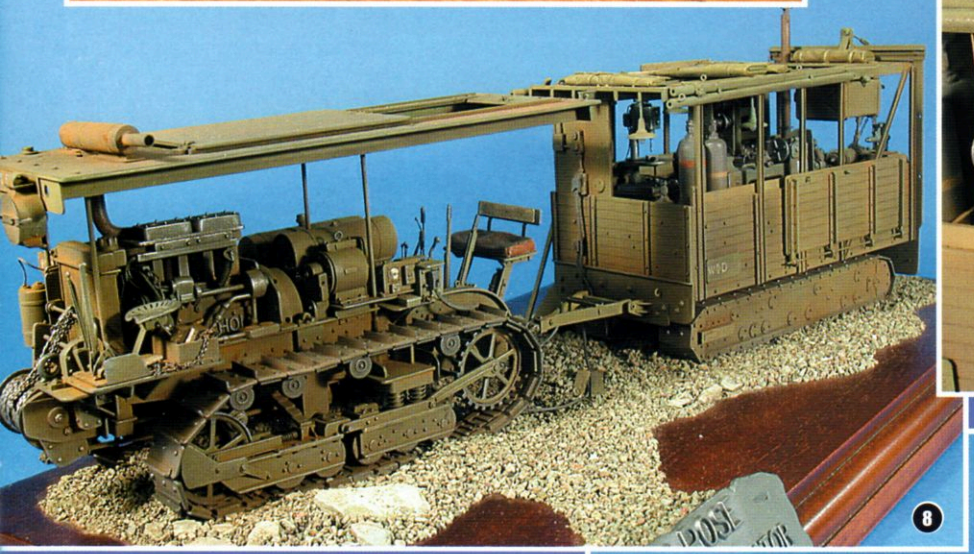
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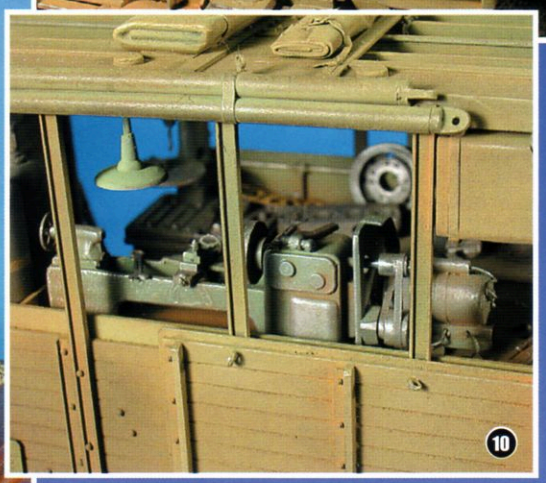
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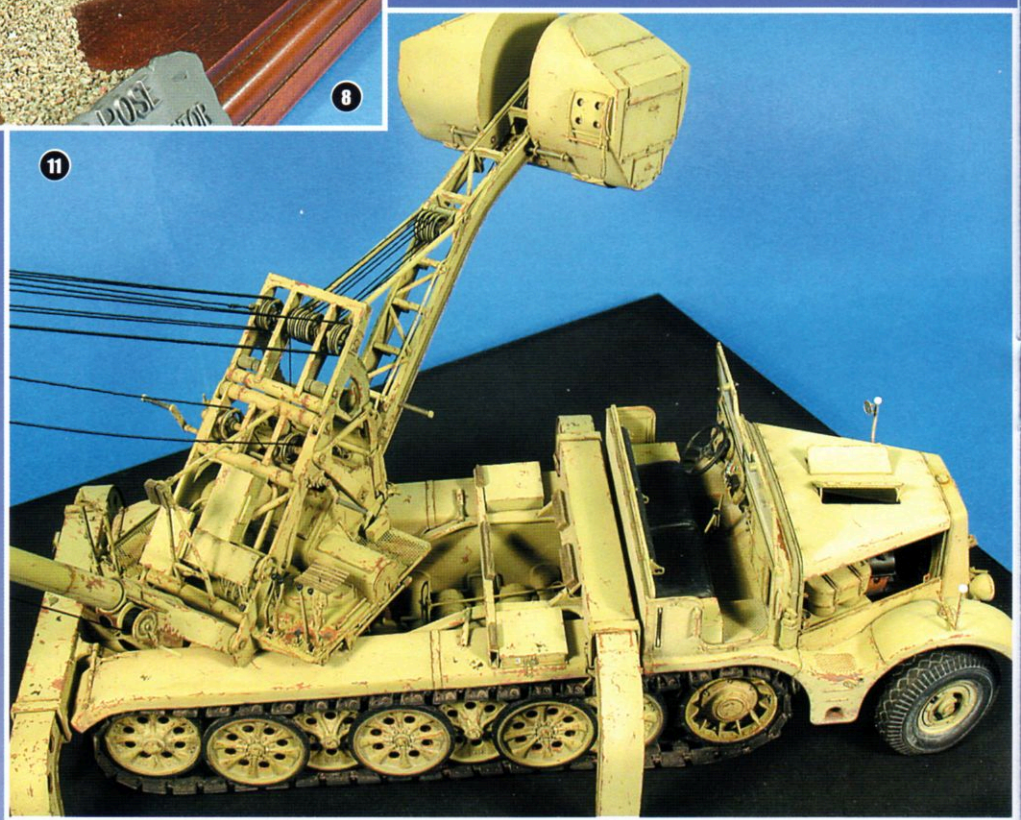
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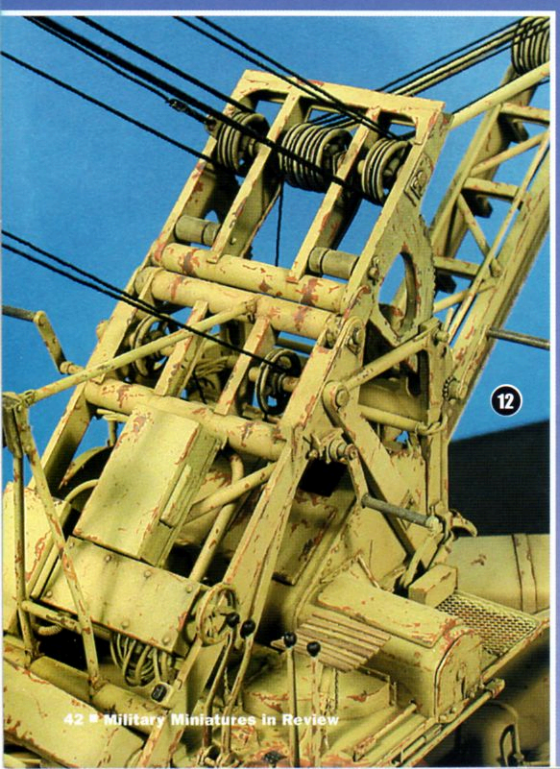
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7. Eric Dufrasnes' amazing Soviet IL22-1 on the Ural 4320 chassis. If that radar array doesn't intimidate you, we don't know what will! 8-10. Overall and detail shots of the "Desert Rose-Holt Tractor 1918" by Stuart McPherson. Of course, this is all completely scratch-built. This modeler also created the 1/16th scale version seen at previous competitions. Just where does one find reference on such a thing? 11, 12. And speaking of scratchbuilding, how does this grab you? An SdKfz9/2 "FAMO" 18-ton halftrack with a scratch built Demag 10-ton crane. Just your average day at the bench for Darren Thompson... 13. OK, we hear ya. A fairly nice model by Alex Clark of a knocked out Panzer IV, what's the big deal? Oh, we forget to mention: it's 1/72 scale! 14. Actually this was not a Gold Medal winner, but the execution of this late war Hitler was so good, we thought we'd share it with you anyway. 15. A super looking Morris Bofors by Carlos de Diego Vaquerizo (a nice Irish guy, we're guessing). 16. This terrific looking Sergeant Stelzel, USMC by Jon Cheeseman was one of several Gold Medal winning figures with a WW2 theme. 17. This is another, Adrian Bay's minor conversion of the Michael Roberts 54mm figure.

Swedish Meatballs

A SPICY NORDIC DUO FROM CHINA

Betcha didn't know that the Swedes have developed some pretty nice tanks. Even though they have been neutral for the last 100 years or so, they have committed themselves to keeping up on their weapons development. I guess being smack dab in the middle of millions of pissed off Europeans will do that to you.

The Swedish interest in turretless armor can be traced back to 1943, when the Sav m/43 was developed. This was essentially a 38(t) chassis with the Bofors 10.5cm howitzer mounted in a fixed superstructure. Interesting factiod: At least one of these vehicles is still around and some of you may have seen it in the film Saving Private Ryan. Weird, wild stuff.

The development of the Stridsvagn 103 was begun in the fifties by the Bofors firm, who envisioned a sleek, low tank that could exploit the natural terrain advantages of the Swedish countryside. The Swedish army was sold on the idea and they awarded a contract to Bofors in 1958, with the first prototype tanks being delivered in 1961. 300 of these babies rolled off the line between 1966 and 1971 in three different versions, A, B and C.

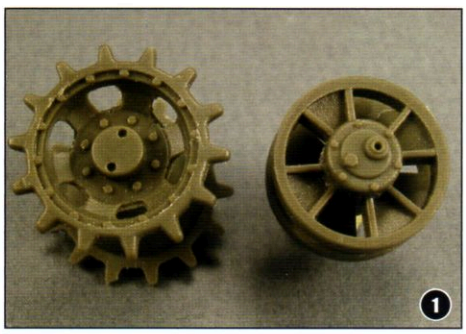
The tank has a variety of highly unique features. First, and most obvious, there's no turret. The main 105mm Bofors L7 kal L/61 gun is fixed (with no recoil mechanism) in a radically sloped and lowered superstructure. Due to an auto-loading system, the "S-Tank" has a crew of only three, the commander, the driver and the radio operator. Both the commander and the driver face the front, but the radio operator faces the rear and he doubles as a driver when the tank needs to be driven backwards. Oddly, the commander also has a set of pedals to drive the tank in a pinch.

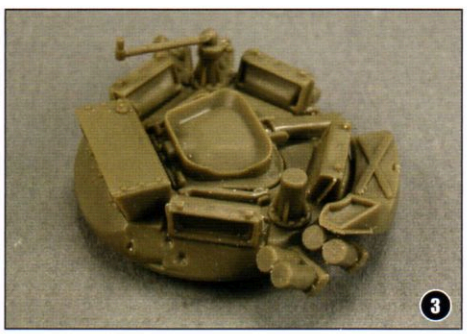
Another unique aspect of the S-Tank is its hydropneumatic suspension. This is how the main gun is aimed, in conjunction with the movement of the tracks. This squishy arrangement can elevate the main gun to 12 degrees and lower it to 10 degrees.

The S-Tank's autoloader totes 50 rounds of main gun ammo and the supply includes APFSDS-T, HE and Smoke. It is said that the gun and loader can crank out 10-15 rounds a minute. Look out!

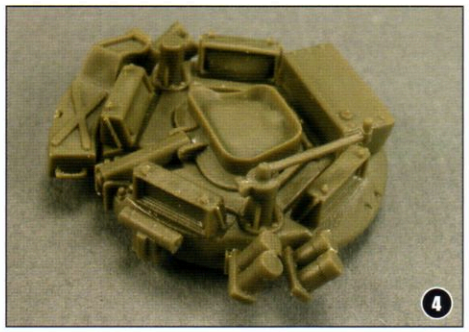
Yet another innovation is the power supply. The A and B versions of the Stridsvagn 103 used a Rolls-Royce K60 diesel for the main juice and a Boeing gas-turbine to add oomph for tough driving.

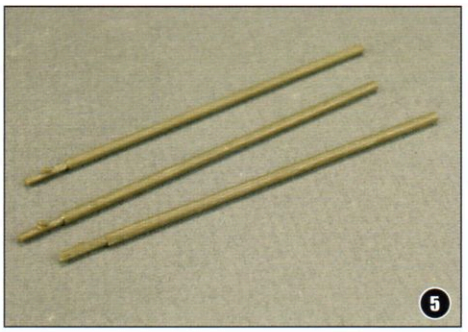
The 103C swapped the main power pack with a Detroit two-stroke multi-fuel, turbo-charged V6-

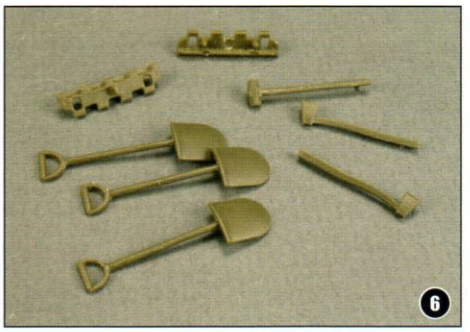




1. The drive sprocket and the front idler are nearly identical on both kits. The sprocket on the C model is wider to accommodate the Leopard track. 2. The front and back of the roadwheels. These are the same or both kits. 3, 4. Left and right side views of the commander's cupola for both the B and the C model. It's quite a complex little subassembly. I don't mention it in the text, but this is best left off during the painting process on the C model.







53T and later, some of the C models were converted to a Caterpillar 553 multi-fuel gas turbine. In either case, the Boeing secondary remained the same.

The S-Tank caused quite a stir when it was introduced. The British were so excited that they leased enough of them to form a squadron for extended field trials in Germany. However, this cool little tank tended to disappoint. The biggest problem was that the main gun could not be fired on the move (the suspension locks to absorb the recoil)—not a positive feature for modern shoot and scoot armor tactics. The Swedes eventually figured this out, the tank even became somewhat of a controversy in Sweden and the late nineties saw all of the S-tanks withdrawn from service. They, along with their Centurion stable mates, were all replaced with the Leopard 2(S).

Just for the S of it

Hey, are you for some fun this weekend? Grab an S-tank and build it on up! The brand new plastic model company Trumpeter has released two versions of the venerable Stridsvagn 103, the B and the C models. I was excited when I first heard about these kits and I don't really know why. I guess they are just plain cool. I was also interested in the differences between the two tanks. Although the kits are essentially the same, the end results are quite different.

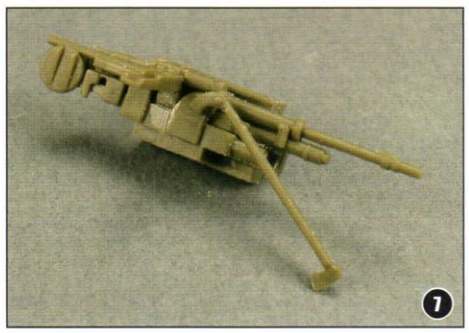
To review these dudesicles, I'll treat them as one model, calling out the differences as I go. I'll split into two sections when we go to paint.

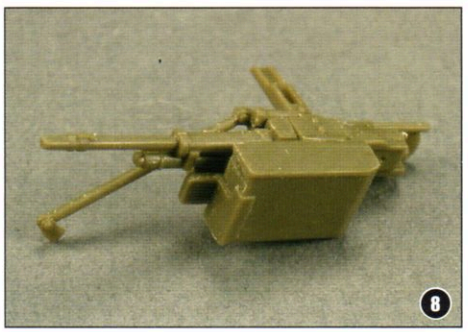
Building the S-Tank is simply a matter of gluing together the two hull sections, adding the suspension and then detailing the model with small parts. No kidding. The 103B kit is composed of 226 parts, including the hull and tracks, while the C version has 257.

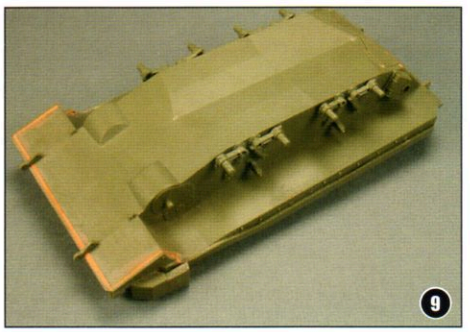
I couldn't resist sticking the hull together, it's only three parts, the upper and lower hull and the rear hull panel. These parts are identical for both kits, but there are a number of holes to open from the underside of the top hull before closing everything up. An access hatch also gets enlarged on the C version. Fit was good, but there is a small amount of shift, so be careful to line everything up and make sure that it's square.

The suspension is pretty simple stuff. I left off the return roller from its support arm until later. It can easily be knocked off during the remaining hull construction.

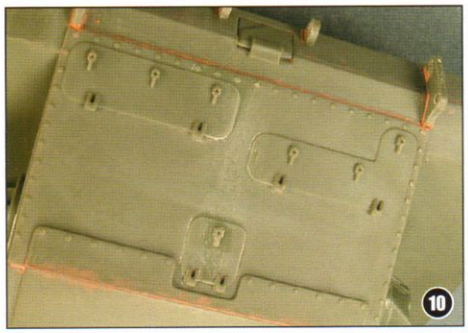
If you want to get hydropneumatic-funky with the suspension, now is the time. The torsion arms can be modified to show the S-Tank's slinky nature.

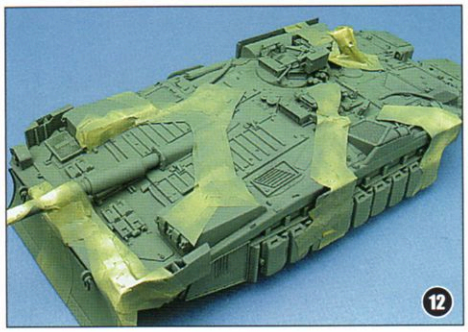


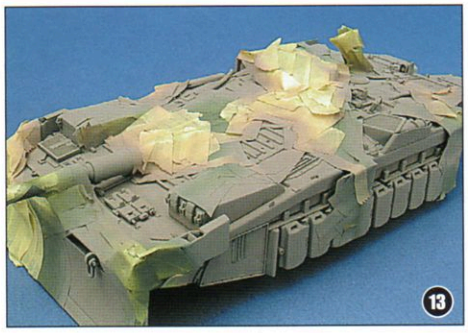


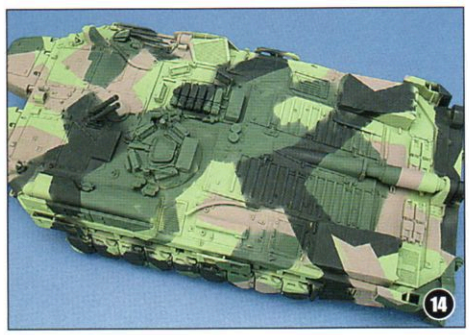


5. These are the poles that are placed in the side brackets. They are part of a "DD" like flotation screen. 6. The spare tools provided for the two kits and the spare links for the B model. 7, 8. Right and left side views of the S-tank's cupola mounted 7.62mm machine gun. 9. Surfs up! Hey, do you think the S-Tank could catch a wave with this highly boat-like lower hull? Yeah, me neither... Both kits share the same upper and lower hull.

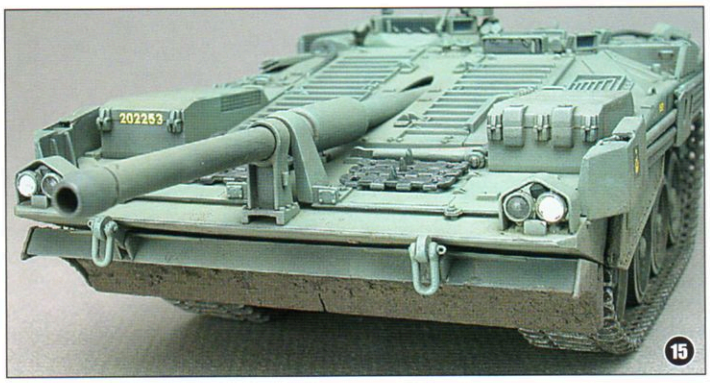








10. The backside. The large hatch to the upper left was used to replenish the shells for the auto loading system. No differences in either kit here. 11. The kits are exactly the same up to this point. From here it's a matter of adding the many unique parts to each. 12. Here, the black has been added to the C Model and this has been masked to receive the dark green. 13. Then, the green was masked and the brown was applied. 14. The final color was the light green. Here, all the tape has been removed. It still looks a bit rough at this point. Touch-up and weathering followed. 15. The finished front end of the B Model. Resicast clear lenses were added. The blackout light was created with Tamiya Clear. 16. The finished front end of the C Model. Resicast lenses were also added and the front blade weathered with plenty of mud. All periscopes were painted flat black, then Tamiya Clear Blue.



The turret

"Um, Pat?" Yes? *"There is no turret on either of these tanks."* Oh, that's right, my mistake. *"(dumb ass)"* What was that? *"Nothing!"*

Skipping right to the hull

These models move pretty fast and it's right on to the hull details. On the C version one of lights gets deleted from the front hull on each side. Since the tracks are different in each kit, the spare track is also different. Also, only one is axe is used on the C and the sledgehammer is deleted. The driver's hatch on the C has an interesting looking array installed on it and it can be built open or closed. The arms are a little tricky, so be careful to have the right part numbers in the right location. The radio operator's hatch of the C gets a twin mortar array. The rubber vent pipes (A5 and A6) on both kits were drilled out prior to installation.

The larger upper hull items are added at this point. The storage boxes, shovels, crew hatches and light guards are all installed now. The barrels were also slipped into their mounts. The C model gets a protective cover for the base of the barrel.

Details for the rear hull are next. There are two large, hinged stowage boxes for each kit and both are of a different design. If they can both be left to flap on their hinges, it will help a lot with painting. For some reason, this is easier on the C model.

There is an option of a large, ribbed exhaust diverter hose for both kits. The part is nicely rendered, except that it's split right down the middle into two halves. I reluctantly discarded it because of its difficult seam.

The commander's hatch cupola (labeled in the instructions as a "conning tower") is a cramped little thing with a lot of stuff on it. I added the hatch and arms first. The hatch can be open or closed. It would look kinda cool with a head poking out.

The vision blocks and commander's sight go on next. The smoke launchers are installed at a slight angle and the instructions provide a guide for proper alignment. I noticed that the small blast doors that flip up to cover the commander's and driver's scopes are missing, but they would be pretty easy to make from thin styrene. On the good side, each of the scopes has the requisite wiper blades!

The FN machine gun is next. I found it easier to put the ammo case hold and base (B19 and B22) together first, then add the feed tray and MG body (B20 and B23). I then installed the brace (B21) and test fit it to the cupola. This is a lot easier than installing the brace once the MG is in place.

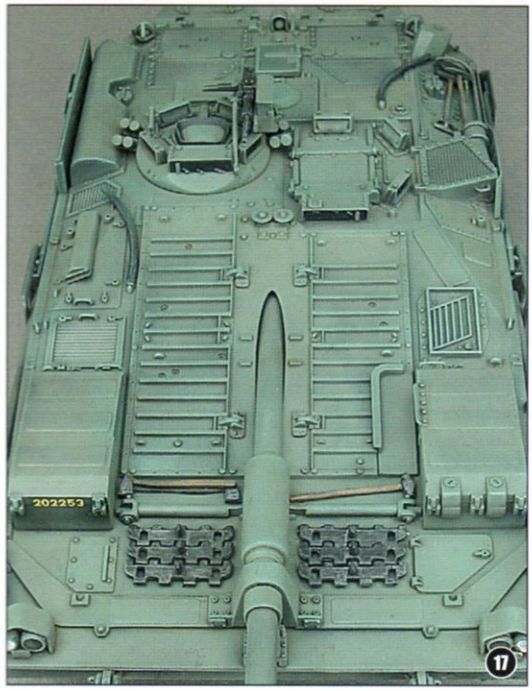
I decided to install the dozer blade on the C model in the lowered position. The rear brackets for this are normally stowed on the front hull. The blade was placed in the down position by clipping it to the top of the bracket. The front and rear two road wheels were then added with the track so the height of the tank can be used to determine how the blade should be angled. Once the proper angle was determined, it was all glued in place.

Speaking of the tracks, both sets are too long. I thought it essential that the track runs should be nice and smooth, with no sagging or looping. Using a sharp X-acto blade, I removed a single link, taking two half-lengths out of each end. This will still allow the tracks to be joined normally. By the way, no glue I tried works on these things. I had to use the 'ol hot screwdriver method suggested in the instructions.

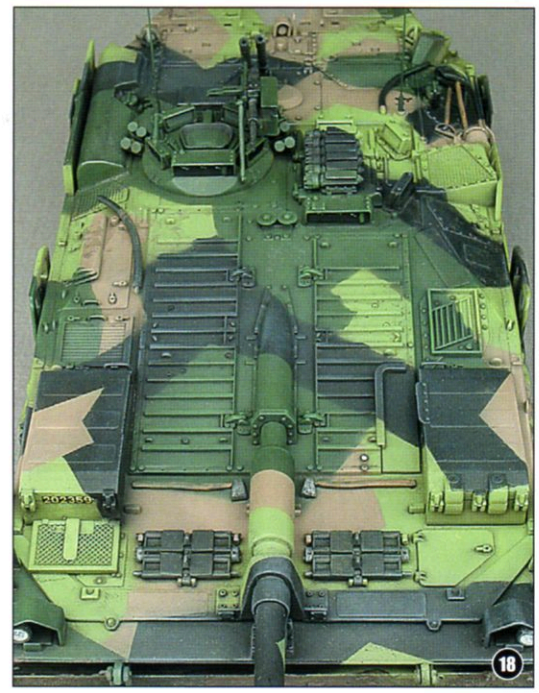
I diverge: finishing the B model

The B model uses a single link steel type track, which, I believe is the same as the Centurion. A simple, short side skirt is installed on the front, over the drive sprocket. The fit on these parts, like the rest of the kit, was superb. I mounted these on a short length of Balsa wood for painting, along with the roadwheels and drive sprockets.

The S-Tanks utilized a series of poles that



17. The wide expanse of the B Model. The color is a bit strange here, RLM02 Gray. It is attractive when finished. The black and yellow registration numbers off set the scheme nicely. 18. Looking down the C Model. One of the most notable differences is the shield around the main gun opening on the C Model. The four-tone scheme was a challenge, but I really liked the results. 19. The rear stowage boxes are square on the B Model. The rear warning placards add a bit of subtle color. 20. Reflector squares are provided for the C Model's rear and front corners. There is also a triangular reflector on the rear of both, but this is mostly obscured by mud on my models. The mud is Hudson & Allen powered earth mixed with water and acrylic medium. Resicast clear lenses were also used for the rear lights, but were painted Tamiya Clear red prior to installation. 21. The cupola of the B Model. I mistakenly thought that the rim of the hatch was rubber and painted it black. It's not! 22, 23. The rear deck of both kits.



I diverge again: finishing the C model

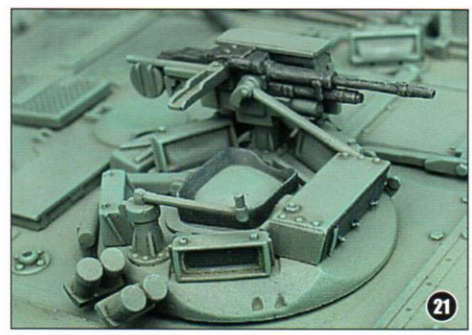
The main external difference between the B and C is the tracks and side skirt system. The C model uses Leopard 2 tracks and an elaborate "armored" side skirt system. It's actually a system of frames that mount hard rubber jerry cans full of diesel fuel. The idea is to use it as kind of a poor man's reactive armor.

Trumpeter has designed this system well and you actually mount the teeny cans onto their frames. They have even rendered the little cotter pins that hold them on. There was no choice but to install these on the model prior to painting. I did

worked in conjunction with canvas screen for deep water fording. These poles and a set of braces are stored in brackets on either side of the tank. They are provided in both kits, but I decided to use them only on the B model. I did not install antennas on the B model.

The instructions call for painting the B model in overall RLM02 Gray. I don't know if this is correct, but it sounded like an attractive scheme. This color is available in the Tamiya line of acrylics as XF-22. I applied this over a base coat of black.

The B gets a cool set of markings, too. There are black and yellow unit crests for the front, yellow registration numbers and yellow and black warning placards. These last items say something like: "bjorna blarna, blarna." The areas to receive them got several light coats of Tamiya clear.



leave off the tracks, wheels and drive sprockets.

For antenna, I selected two of the "pre-sprung" Mini-mecca parts. They were installed in the empty sockets. Strangely, the instructions illustrate the installation of antenna, but don't mention were they might come from.

I originally thought that I could get away with a simple, three-tone NATO-type camouflage scheme on the C model. No such luck. The C used a very elaborate four-color, hard-line scheme of black, medium green, light brown and a kinda of lime green. Holy airbrush, Batman!

This stumped me for a bit, but I finally turned to an old friend: Tamiya masking tape. This is a straight, hard line scheme, so the 'ol Silly Putty trick won't work.

What I did was start with the darkest color first and then masked my way to the lightest. The first color was basic black, XF-1. Then, the areas to remain black were masked off. Then, J.A. Green, XF-13 was added, although XF-58, Olive Green may have been a better choice. Again, the areas to remain green were masked, right over the other layer. The third color was Flat Earth, XF-52.

Throughout the process I used the instructions as a guide for applying the pattern. It was a little hard to discern all the colors, but it was the only thing I had. All four views are shown, which is quite handy.

The fourth and final color was a guess (as they all were, really). I didn't have anything in my Tamiya palette, so I mixed the green using Vallejo Light Green and Basic Yellow. Regular Vallejo does not spray all that great, but using a combination of Tamiya thinner and water, I got it down.

It was then a matter of carefully removing all

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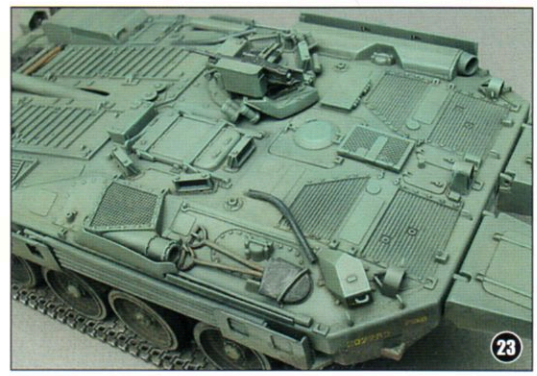


four layers of masking tape without pulling off parts of the model. The initial result was a little fuzzy looking, but after some careful touch-up and a very light unifying over spray of Tamiya Buff, XF57, it was ready for final weathering.

Weathering and final finish on both models

The same sheet of decals is provided for both kits and it contains a scheme for each version. The decals are nice and thin and went down fine using Solvaset. Both kits were initially weathered using an oil wash of black and burnt sienna oil paint. The many small details on both were picked out using a spot wash.

Drybrushing was accomplished on both tanks with Vallejo paints. Field Gray was used on the B model, but four custom colors needed to be mixed for the C model. The detail on both kits really starts to sing at this point.

All of the pioneer tools were painted using Vallejo Wood applied thinly over a base coat of black. Metal effects were created with Berol Prismacolor pencils worked into the finish, in some cases with light machine oil. The additional metal effects attained on the C model dozer blade were created with a heavy dry brush of Polly-Scale Pewter.

All of the periscopes were painted flat black, then over coated with Tamiya Clear Blue.

The tracks on the B model were sprayed with a mixture of Tamiya Black, Red Brown and Flat Aluminum. The C model tracks were painted black and the outside edges were drybrushed with Polly-Scale Pewter.

The process of using powdered pigment to create mud and dirt has become quite popular in the foreign modeling press, but the explanation of their use is always a bit incomplete. You can mix it with water or Tamiya thinner, but the result will be very unstable. The material will flake off and will not tolerate handling. The secret, if there is one, is to use a binding medium. There are several brands and types of acrylic mediums on the market and the one you want is acrylic matte medium. Any brand will do, but it wouldn't hurt to buy a quality name like Liquitex.

The medium essentially creates a thick paint that you can apply to your model for very realistic effects. Thinning, mixing and cleaning is all done with water. A few drops of hand soap or dish detergent is also necessary to break the surface tension and allow it to mix.

Using the mixture thin also can create some interesting effects and layering thicker mixtures increases the realism even more.

My method is to apply some of the thin mixture first, then sprinkle on the powder, blowing off the excess. This is great for making dried mud on roadwheels. If you don't like the result, just wipe it off. Excess can also be easily wiped away from areas like roadwheel rubber.

This was used extensively on both models, with a heavier build-up on the lower hull behind the roadwheels, the bottom rear plate and the dozer blade. An especially heavy application was given to the lowered dozer blade on the C model.

The suspension and tracks were then carefully installed on each model and a light coat of Vallejo Flat was sprayed on each.

A final touch was the installation of clear lenses to the various lights. The taillights were painted with Tamiya Clear Red prior to installation.

Conclusions, or look at that S-Tank go!

I was very pleased with each of these kits. The detail was first rate throughout and no fit problems were experienced anywhere on either kit. The professional level of tooling was impressive for such a young company.

I found the paint schemes to be very attractive when finished and I was especially pleased with the way the four-color one turned out. It was fun, too, in spite of challenges it presented. The tracks on both were sub-standard, in my opinion. They are difficult to glue and neither holds paint very well, as I found out after having the model on the shelf for a couple of days. However, there are aftermarket solutions for each.

In the accuracy department, the real Stridsvagn 103 measures out at 8.99 meters long, 3.63 meters wide and 2.14 meters high. The models measure out in scale at 8.99m, 3.49m and 2.14m. Fourteen scale centimeters aside, I was quite happy.

For what you get in the box, you really can't beat it for the price. So get your Swede on soon!

—Pat Stansell

MMiR RECCE

Trumpeter Swedish "S Tank" STRV 103B Main Battle Tank. Kit number 00309. **Trumpeter Swedish "S Tank" STRV 103C Main Battle Tank.** Kit number 00310. Both kits graciously provided by the U.S. importer of Trumpeter, Stevens International. Suggested retail price for each kit, $24.95.

References

Boy, one does have to dig. Here's what I found.

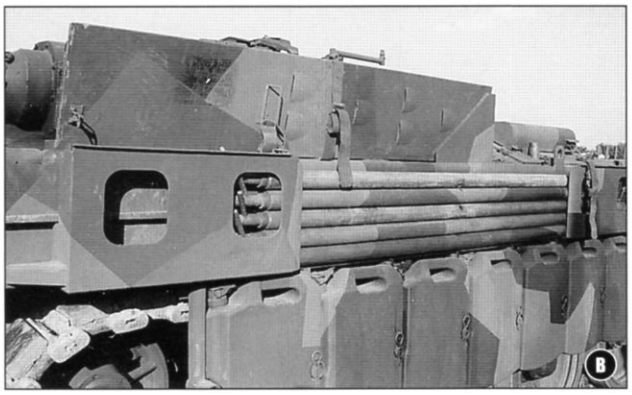
Tank Magazine 1982, #5. Sensha-Magazine Co, Ltd. Japan.

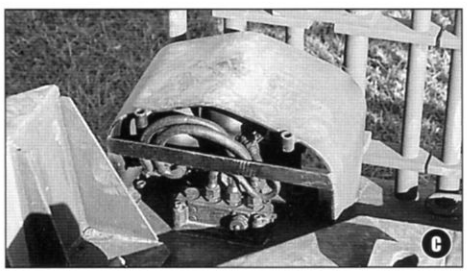
Tank Magazine 1985, #2. Sensha-Magazine Co, Ltd. Japan.

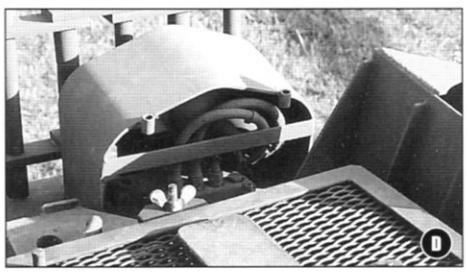
Tank Magazine 1990,Vol. 13, No.2 Sensha-Magazine Co, Ltd. Japan.

The Illustrated History of Tanks by Andy Lightbody and Joe Poyer, Publications International, Ltd., 1989. ISBN 0-88176-651-8

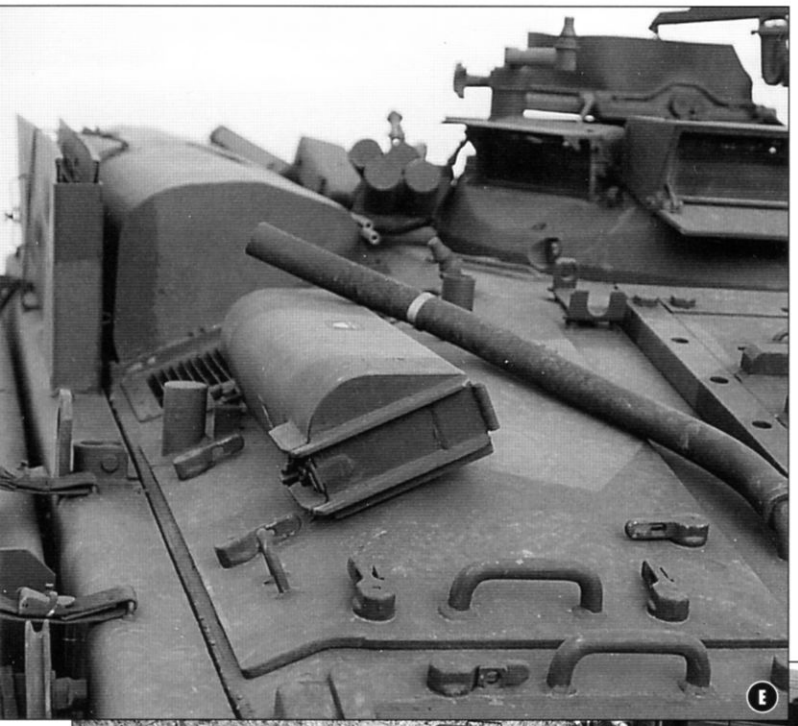
http://w1.500.telia.com/~u50015076/ A good site for information on Swedish armor in general and the Stridsvagn 103.

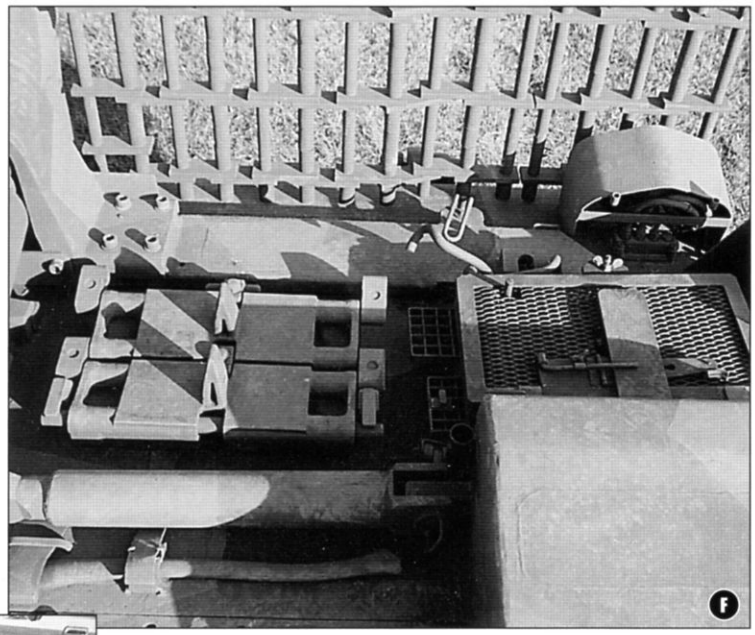


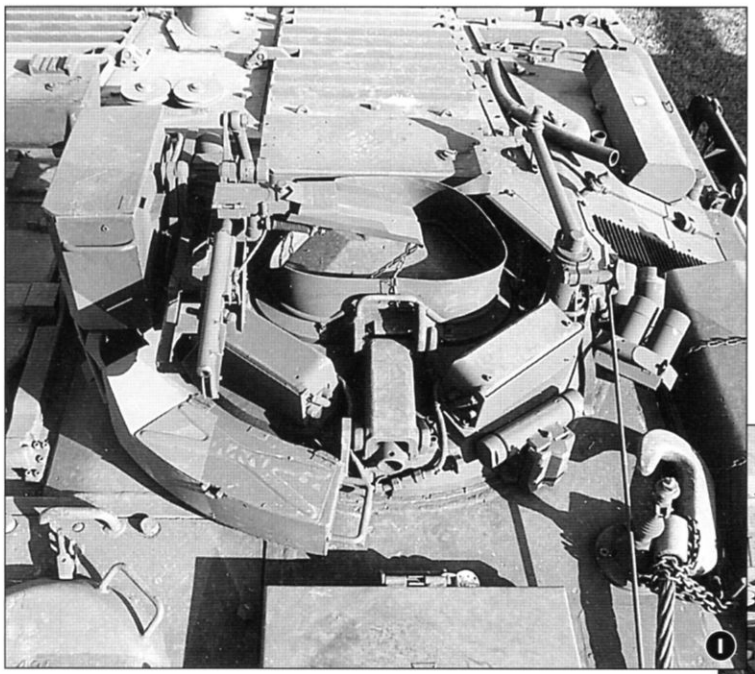


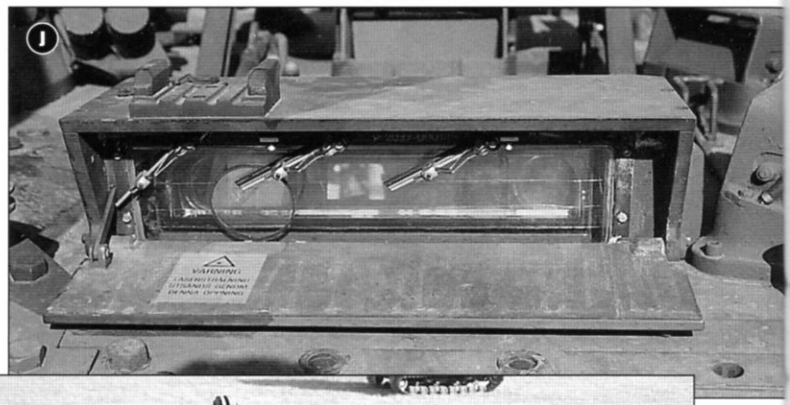


This C Model S-Tank is owned by the Virginia Military Museum and was photographed there by Brian Nicklas. A. The front end of the VMM vehicle has a very simple screen made of metal slats and rods. This is intended as a type of "Schürzen" pre detonation screen. B. The right side of the hull showing the racks for the wading screen supports. Most have been camouflaged along with the rest of the hull. The side "reactive" armor jugs are also seen here. C, D. The rear of each of the front headlights. There is quite a complex grouping of wires within the shrouds. Also note the two short tubes welded to the backs of the guards. E. Details of the hull on the right side, in front of the cupola. There are two of these vent tubes on the hull and each is black rubber. F. Details of the front detonation screen and the spare track mount. The placement of the forward vent screen seen here is unique to the C Model. G. The rear vents on the left-hand side. The second of the two vent hoses can be seen









here along with the tow cable snaking across the deck. H. The antenna base is hinged at the top to allow the aerials to be tied back. I. The commander's cupola as seen from the rear of the tank. J. The main driver's periscope has three wiper blades in addition to its blast door. K. The cupola from the rear. The box to the left is the main supply for the cupola-mounted 7.62 MG. The weapon is not fitted here.

Like shooting Frogs in a barrel

Building the Master Productions 40mm Bofors Air Defense Truck

The Bofors 40mm gun was originally a German Krupp design from late World War I. The Bofors Company in Sweden somehow arranged to produce these weapons in small numbers beginning in the 1930's. During World War II the United States, Canada and England all produced licensed copies. The British produced the Mark 1 single barrel and the Mark II double barrel. The United States also produced a single, a double, plus a quad mount of the 40mm and supplied them to most of our allies. The 40mm Bofors is still in production today, which means it is probably the longest running produced heavy caliber gun.

The design was so popular that the Allies put it on everything from ships to trucks, not to mention a towed configuration. The Canadians and British mounted the Mark I single barrel version on the Ford F60B, 3-ton CMP chassis. The Free French also liked the design and did the same thing using a GMC truck, hence an interesting story and an interesting model.

History of the 22nd Colonial Anti-aircraft Defense Group

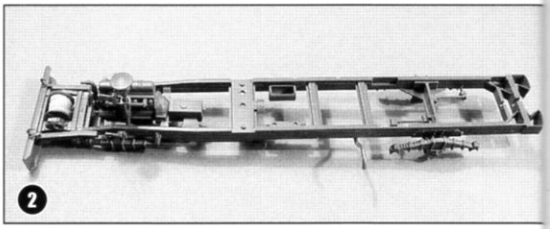
From what I could find, the only unit of the Free French that used the GMC Bofors mounted version during World War II was the 22nd Anti-aircraft Defense Colonial Group. This same Group also used them afterwards in Indochina. I could not find any mention of other units using them, but there certainly could have been more. The Group was formed at Temara, Morocco in October 1943. It was formed from the light anti-aircraft element of the 3rd Colonial Artillery Battery from Chad. Captain Lecole commanded the Group as part of General Leclerc's Free French forces.

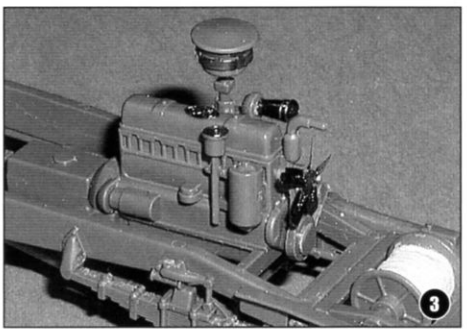
The 22nd was moved to Camp Cazes, Casablanca on 1 November 1943 and at that time officially presented as a Group to General Leclerc by its new commander, Major Lancrenon. The original equipment was mounted on old Chevrolet trucks using some even older anti-aircraft guns from the original Chad unit. The 22nd Group was then further assigned to the 2nd French Armored Division. Around that time their equipment was upgraded to the new 40mm Bofors Mark I mounted on the GMC 353 chassis, which had been developed in the workshops of the French 2nd Armored Division. A total of 32 of these new weapon systems were reportedly built during January 1944.

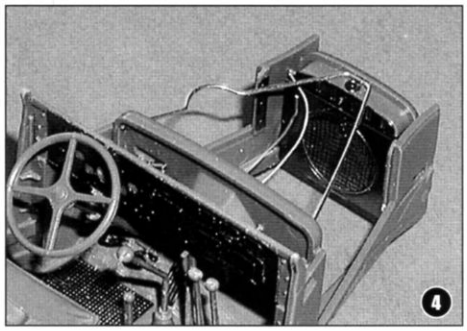
The 22nd Group landed with the rest of the division in Normandy between July 31st and August 1st 1944. On August 7th an operations order was issued to the Group with a general mission of protecting the 2nd Division's columns and camps. On August 12th they were assigned, along with the rest of the local anti-aircraft weapons, to defend the Alencon region of Normandy. Their first kill came at this time when the 1st battery was credited with downing a German bomber on August 13th.

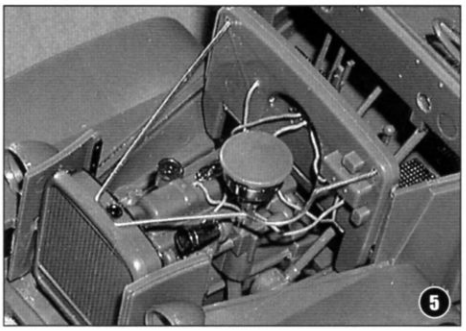
The 2nd Armored Division started its move towards Paris on August 23rd with the 22nd providing protection. The 3rd battery lost three guns on August 24th in the vicinity of Jouy-en-Josas near Paris. The 1st Battery arrived in Paris at noon on the 25th and was engaged in the Saint-Mandé area. The whole Group provided protection to the capital beginning on the evening of the 25th.

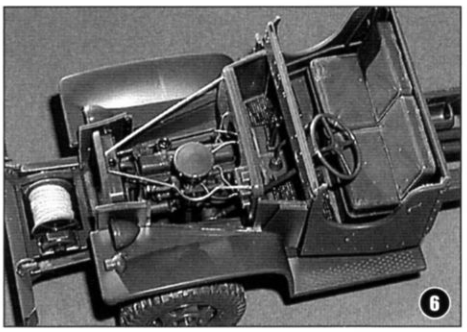
The Group left Paris on September 8th with the main mission of defending the 2nd Division's artillery. The 4th battery was deployed at Dompaire and the 2nd battery was deployed to protect the bridges in the Nomexy, Chatel-sur-La Moselle and Menil-Flin on the Meurthe. Some of the guns were shelled by German artillery on the 13th of September but no damage was reported. The unit did not move again till the 31st of October. The Group did knock down some fighters starting on the 31st of October when the 2nd battery shot down a Focke-Wulf 190 at Chennevières. During the next six days the Group shot down no fewer than six Messerschmitt Bf109's. I wonder if these claims were going up because they were getting to be better shots or just going deeper into wine country? Anyway on 18 November the 3rd battery brought down another Bf109 near Buriville. The Group then moved to Strasbourg on November 23rd and took up defense of the town. On December 31st the Group was relieved and went on to work with the US 15th Corps in the mopping up of the Colmar pocket. The

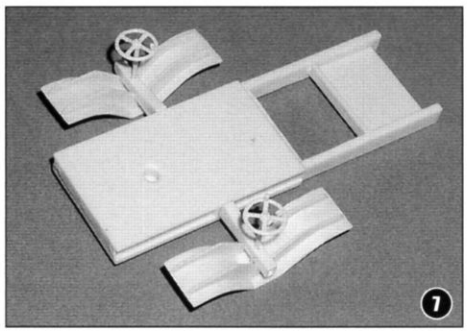


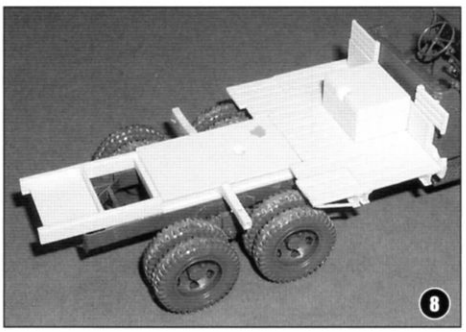


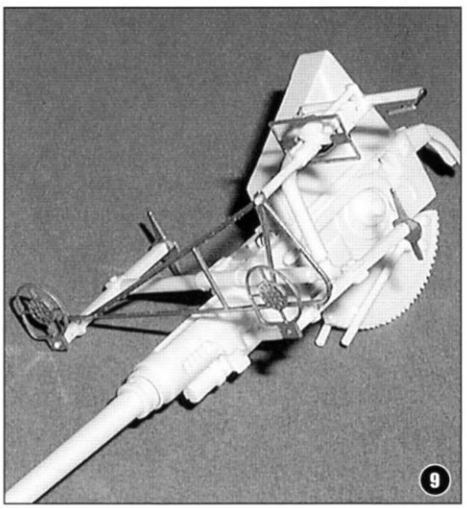












1. This is a later version of the conversion, which might be post WWII. Ron Perry who took this photo at a vehicle show in France kindly gave his permission to use it here. 2. Removing the mount for the spare tire was the only alteration to the basic frame of the Tamiya kit. 3. The engine was detailed using the Eduard photo-etch set. The string on the winch came from the Tamiya kit. 4. The cab interior was also detailed using the Eduard set. The wire frame over the engine was made from brass wire. The bulge on the side is for the air cleaner. 5. The installed engine complete with extra wiring made using thin soldering wire. 6. The truck chassis complete and awaiting the new bed. The instructions mention removing the two rear bumpers, but I did find them in reference photos. 7. The central platform was partially assembled. The two outriggers are pads that are lowered on the rear tires during firing, using the hand wheel cranks. 8. The forward platform was assembled, then glued onto the chassis. You need to get this guy on first, since the placement of the center and rear platforms depend on its position. 9. The gun assembly was the hardest part of the kit. The sight is very delicate and somewhat difficult to figure out.

war record for the Group included 17 aircraft shot down and six damaged.

When the 2nd Armored Division was shipped to Indochina (you remember; Vietnam) in March 1946 it took its 40mm Bofors mounted on the GMC's with them. Of course, the Viet Minh did not have a lot of aircraft, so the trucks were given armor plating and served as convoy escorts and infantry carriers. Unfortunately, it was found that the weight of the armor plating was too much for the GMC chassis and breakdowns were common.

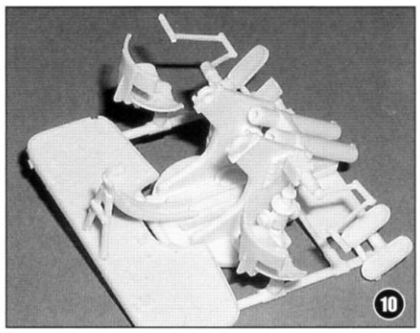
In doing my research, I found at least three different versions of the truck's configuration. The first version, which this model represents, is the wartime-produced truck and appears more like a field modified configuration because of its crudity. There is also a very similar version, which has a very different gun deck and more storage boxes. This conversion looks more a like a factory job with metal boxes and seats, unlike the all wooden earlier version. The French Army's Technical Section was reported to have produced a standard version, which could be this later type, but I could find no further details. There are several photos of a restored version of this later type on the website of the French 2nd Armored Division that were taken at a vehicle show in France. Last, there is the armored version mentioned above, which is very similar to our own gun trucks in Vietnam.

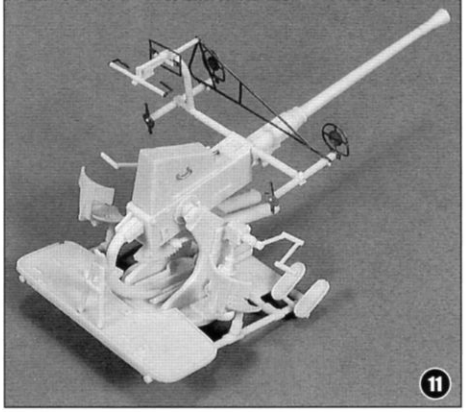
The Master Productions little gem

This is the first kit from Master Productions I have seen and I was very impressed with the quality of the castings. The kit can work on either the Tamiya GMC or Italeri GMC kit. The 54 pieces of resin are cast in a cream color and the kit also includes a small photo-etch sheet of nine parts. The instructions are rather simple and all in French. I was able to go online and translate the short notes, which helped later. The instructions cover the different modifications necessary for both the Tamiya and Italeri kits. The Tamiya kit is an old standard and includes five sprues of 168 parts cast in olive green plastic, plus a clear sprue of four pieces. I also used the Eduard photo-etch set for the Tamiya GMC to spruce up the kit a little.

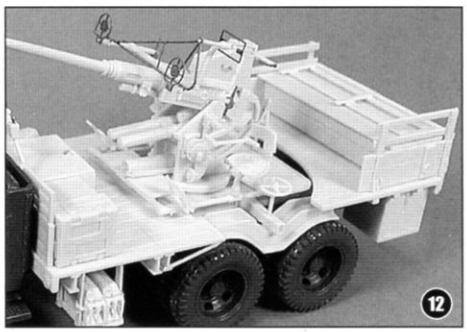
To winch or not

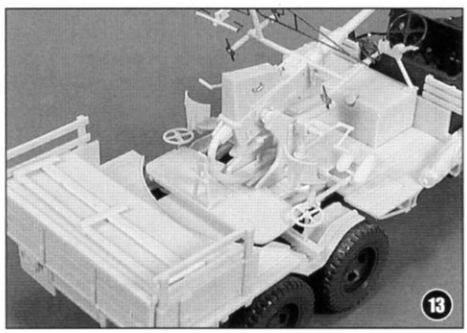
The first decision you need to make is whether or not you want a winch on the front. The Master Production does not mention it one way or the

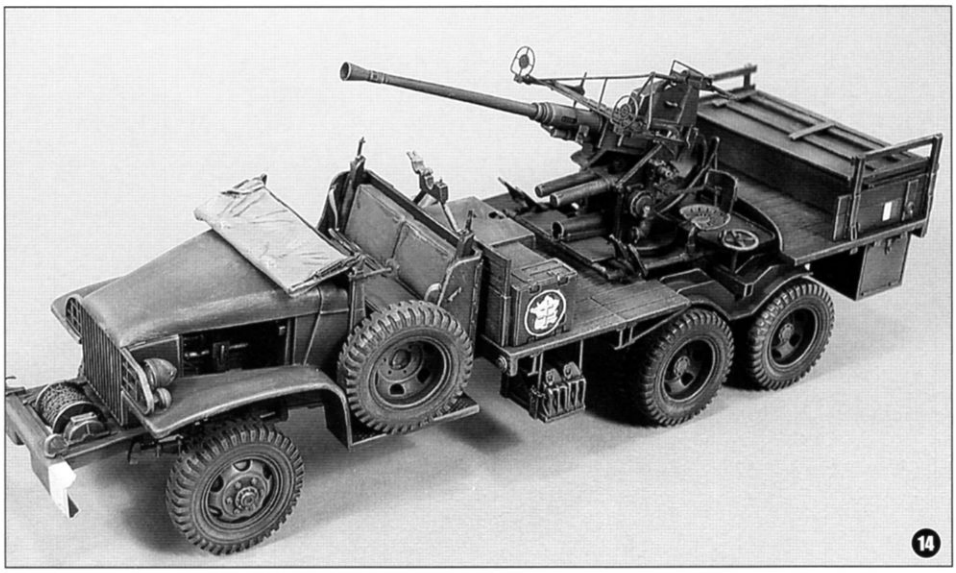




10. The gun platform was assembled, again with some difficulty. The trough on the rear is for the empty shell castings. One of the foot pedals on the left is only half formed. 11. The completed gun assembly. I originally mounted the gun without gluing it, but it kept coming off. 12. The completed model ready for painting. The hood was not glued on yet since I wanted to paint the engine compartment first. 13. A view of the details of the rear platform with all the boxes in place. 14. The Free French decal is from an old ADV dry transfer set. It required several coats of Micro Sol to get it to conform to the ammunition box side. The canvas windshield cover also came with the Master Production kit. All the canvas was painted with Vallejo paints and dry brushed with oils.



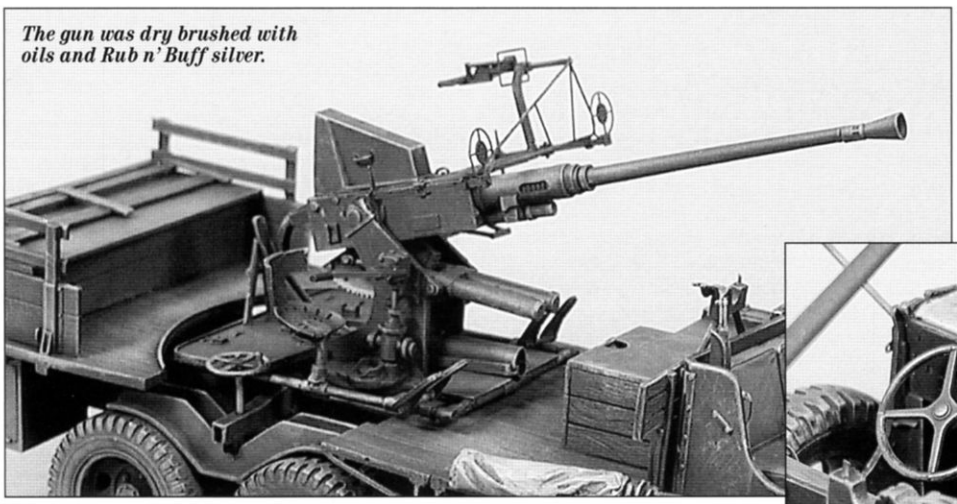




glued on the frame. The Master Production instructions tell you to remove the spare tire mount on the side of the frame and the rear bumpers. I did remove the spare tire mount, but left the rear bumpers since the photos I have show them. They are so far under the chassis when the new bed is installed you cannot really see them.

The drive shaft assembly was completed and glued to the chassis. I just want to say the Tamiya kit of the GMC is one beautiful kit. The pieces went together without any problems (thanks for letting me get that off my chest). Next, I used the first parts of the Master Production kit. They supply an extra set of steering levelers for the left front wheel. I am not sure what they are for, but I glued them on anyway. I then glued all the brake drums and tires together. After they had dried, I sanded down the tire seams using an emery board.

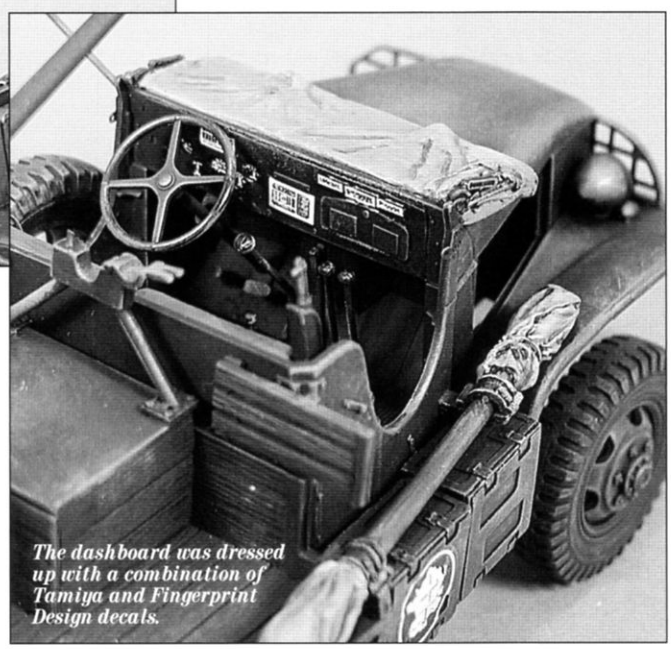
The cab was then detailed by adding photo-etch pedals and floor mats. The driver and passenger seats were also glued in. The details on the dashboard were removed and the photo-etch dash was glued on. The cab sides and the fenders were then glued on. Holes were drilled into the firewall to run thin solder wires through. These were glued in



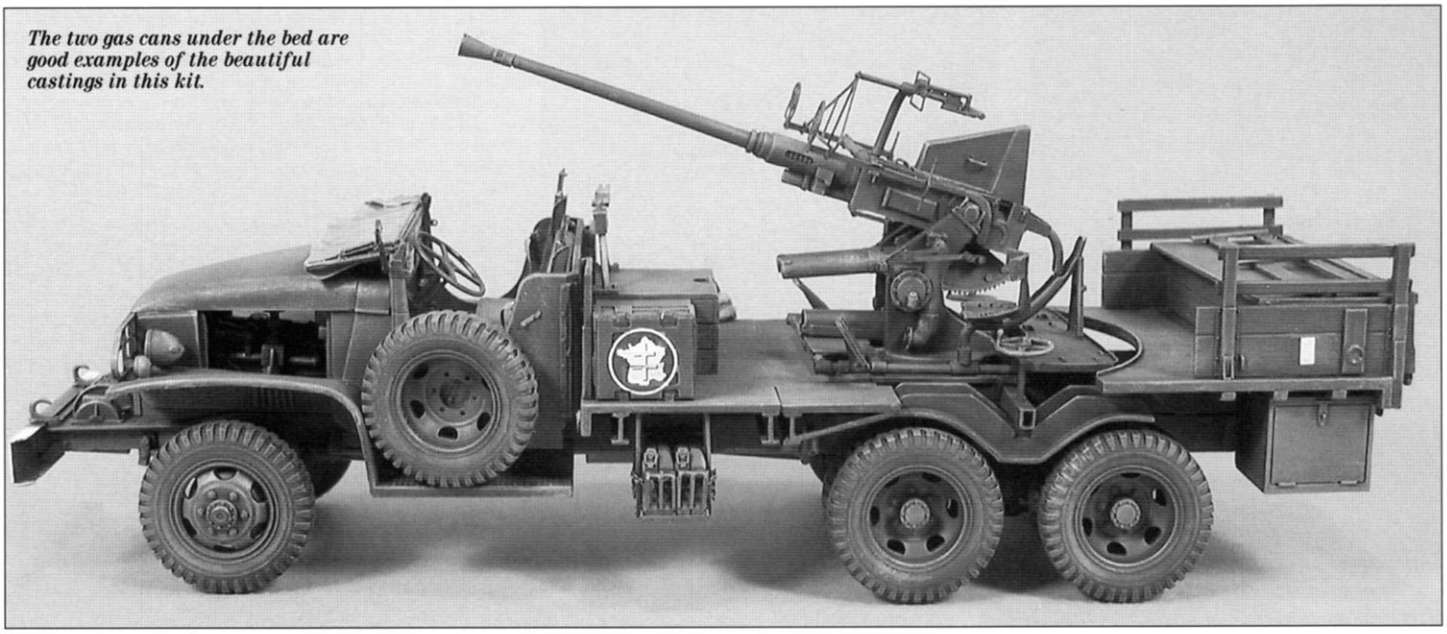
The gun was dry brushed with oils and Rub n' Buff silver.

other. Even though the instructions do not show it, there is a photo on the first page showing a number of 40 mm Bofors on GMC's in a field and at least two of them clearly have winches. I personally like winching (or is that winches?), they just turn me on. You know it's the drums and cables and stuff. So anyway, I decided I wanted a winch. Boy, I hope my wife doesn't read this. You have a different bumper and other smaller support bars that go along with that decision, but Tamiya's instructions are quite clear. I used the string provided in the kit to simulate the cable on the spool.

The engine was assembled next and I used the Eduard photo-etch parts to detail it. It was then



The dashboard was dressed up with a combination of Tamiya and Fingerprint Design decals.



The two gas cans under the bed are good examples of the beautiful castings in this kit.

before attaching the firewall to the cab. The headlights were attached, then the whole thing was glued to the chassis. I did leave the front grill off until after painting to make it easier to get the headlight lenses in. The wiring for the engine was then connected to various places and a brass wire support was made and glued over the engine.

New bed details

Construction of the bed started with cleaning up the three main pieces. The forward section needs to be glued on first to be sure you position the center section correctly. There is a tire brake pad on each side that is used to lock the wheels when in the firing position. They are screwed down using a hand wheel. The hand wheels and pads can interfere with the firing platform, so I left them loose until I was finished with painting. I then added the boxes underneath the rear section and glued the rear section to the truck frame. The instructions are a little vague in a couple of places. The photo of the guns on the front page is a lot of help, but it only shows the left side. The photo of the model does show the right side, so between them I was able to figure everything out. I think! The only area I had difficulty with was with the spare barrel, which goes on the right side next to the cab. I had to do some trimming to get it to mount and even then it was not lined up like I wanted. The rear wants to stick way out and I don't think that is right. I finally managed to get it mostly on the rear deck. I then glued on the three ammunition boxes. Two go on the right passenger door and the other on the rear deck.

The Bofors gun

The gun platform and gun were assembled separately and only attached after all the detail was complete. I started with the base, which consisted of a u-shape frame and a small platform. These were glued together then the details were added. Oddly enough, the left set of foot pedals has one half pedal which appears to be on purpose. Anyway, the instructions show it that way and I had no reference images that helped. I did drill out the holes in the two recuperator tubes a little deeper.

The gun was difficult to assemble, to say the least. You get a choice of ammunition feeds. Either an open feed or a magazine covered type. I also added three small brass wire handles. Now to the one disappointment in the kit: the photo-etch. My sheet was not etched completely. It had a double layer like an offset resin mold. This causes some of the pieces to have the holes where they are not supposed to be. Unfortunately, the brass is too thick to cut, so I just ignored them and treated the pieces as normal. Once the sighting assembly was complete, I glued it onto the gun and the gun was slipped into its mount on the bed. Although I did not initially glue the barrel assembly, I ended up having to because it kept slipping off.

Let's paint

I wanted to paint this truck as close as possible to the few reference photos I had. The instructions ignore this question entirely. The trucks were U.S. Army olive drab and the French apparently painted the front bumpers white on the ends. There was also a unit symbol on the grill, but I did not have a photo showing the details and could not find out what the colors were. I could not discover what it was related to, so I decided not to try to reproduce it.

I first sprayed the entire model with Tamiya flat black. I sprayed the front bumper ends with Tamiya flat white. These where then masked off. I then sprayed the upper surfaces with Tamiya olive drab. The wheel hubs were painted using a template to mask off the tires. I then painted some of the components on the engine black, like the air filter, starter and generator. The engine was given a wash of black/burnt umber to represent oil and then dry brushed with silver paint. After the engine was complete, the hood was then glued on. I had left the engine compartment sides off, so you could see the details. This was not uncommon with this truck. The exhaust pipe and muffler were painted with Polly Scale panzer red brown.

The decals were then added. I primarily used the ADV dry transfer set that I purchased several years ago, since it had license plates and Free French emblems on it. I put the French flag on the front bumper and two rear side panels. I also put a license plate on the rear with some made up numbers. A Free French emblem was put on each side. The cab interior was detailed using the Tamiya kit decals for the dash, plus dial faces from the Fingerprint Design decal set for U.S. Internal markings. All of these were given a coat of Micro Sol. The Free French emblems required several coats to get them to snuggle down.

I then dry brushed the vehicle with a combination of white, sap green and burnt umber oils. I also used Rub n' Buff silver liberally on the gun. The last step was to spray the bottom of the vehicle with Polly Scale dirt to mess it up.

Recommendation

This was actually a pretty easy conversion, even if the directions were in French. Thank goodness for online translators! I was extremely impressed with the high quality of the castings in completeness, the absence of air holes and their delicate details. It is a shame the photo-etch did not measure up to the rest of the kit. I highly recommend this one for anyone interested in the weird and wonderful gear of the French Army.

—Jim Hensley

MMiR RECCE

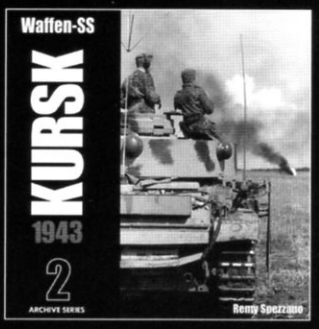
Master Productions GMC 40 mm Bofors Conversion. Kit number 35004. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price $57.00
Tamiya U.S. 2.5-ton Cargo Truck. Kit number 35218. Suggested retail price $31.46
Eduard GMC 352/353 Cargo Truck. Kit number 35170. Suggested retail price $19.99
Fingerprint Designs U.S. Internal stenciling 1940s/50s. Item number FPD 35/010.
ADV French Markings 1930 to 1945. Item number 35706.

References

GMC 353 & 352 by Frantisek Koran & Jan Mostek, Wings and Wheels Publications, Special Museum Line #3, Prague, Czech Republic 1997. ISSN: 1211-0671. Highly recommend. No photos of the gun truck, but everything else is there.

The GMC 6x6 and DUKW A Universal Truck by Jean-Michel Boniface and Jean-Gabriel Jeudy, Haynes Publishing Group, France, 1990. ISBN: 0-85429-860-6. This was my lifesaver, but it is a little hard to find since it is out of print. It has a good history and photos of this guy. Although originally in French, it was translated to English and reprinted at some point.

1943 KURSK



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE NEW TITLE FROM RZM

Above: The SdKfz 250/11 was equipped with a 2.8cm sPzB 41 anti-tank gun with 168 rounds and carried a lightweight field carriage so that the gun could be dismounted. This vehicle was generally issued to platoon leaders. Below: SS motorcycle troops display captured Soviet battle flag.

A 3.7cm Flak gun in action. These guns were very effective against Soviet aircraft, although they were often used against ground targets as well. The 3.7cm shell could inflict damage even upon the heavily armored Soviet IL-2, known as the Sturmovik, which was one of the more effective Russian ground attack aircraft. The feared Sturmovik was nearly invulnerable to anti-aircraft fire from light machine guns and even 2cm guns. Inset: A command tank of Das Reich's Tiger company.

A Das Reich medical officer examines a wounded Russian as his comrade looks on. Below right: SS-Sturmbannführer Christian Tychsen of commander of IInd battalion, SS-Panzer Regiment 2 of Das Reich congratulates a member of his unit. The Panzer III in the background carries a full set of armored side skirts.

A Marder stands by while knocked-out enemy tanks burn in the distance. Although effective weapons, the lightly armored Marders had to fire from concealed positions and fire first in order to survive encounters with Soviet tanks.

An artillery officer of the 1st SS-Panzer Grenadier Division Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler confers with two Wehrmacht officers about a fire mission. Interestingly, the officer at the left wears an SS style sleeve eagle on the breast of his custom made summer tunic.

Knight's Cross holder SS-Sturmbannführer Vincenz Kaiser, commander of the halftrack battalion of Das Reich, confers with his officers in the shadow of a knocked-out Churchill tank.

A Chinese rocket's "Red" glare

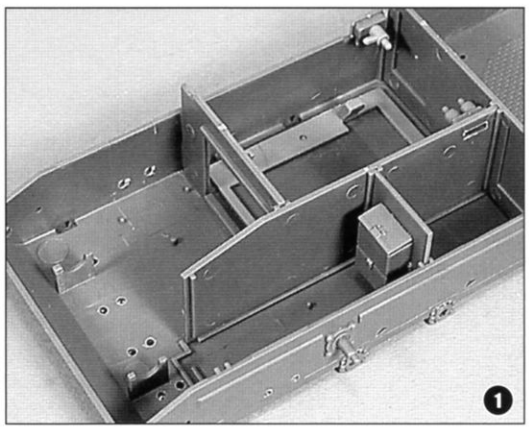
Building the Trumpeter Type 89 MRL

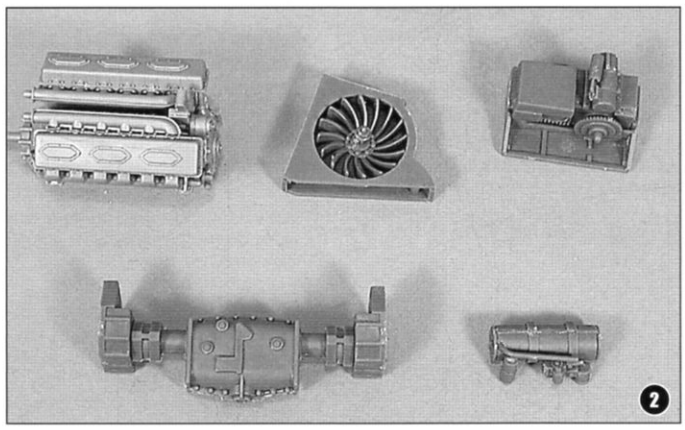
As everyone knows, the Chinese invented gunpowder in 850 AD. Actually, I had to look it up, but I'll bet most people know that. A few centuries later, in 1150, they came up with rockets. However, it took them until 1206 to first use them against an enemy instead of using them for 4th of July fireworks shows. Hey, you never know—they may have set off fireworks on the 4th of July. I guess they got tired of oohs and ahs and thought it would be more fun to shoot at someone. To go to the next step, the Chinese had to wait around another 800 years for Multiple Rocket Launchers (MRLs). Even then, they got their start from the Russians. All the early MRLs the Chinese had were "hand me downs" from the Russians that were first given to them during the Korean War. Since then, they have developed a whole series of MRLs, with the latest being Type 89 MRL. This is an excellent example of a modification of the famous Russian BM-21.

The Russians never actually gave the Chinese any BM-21's, since they were not on speaking terms by the time the Russians developed and fielded them in 1964. Instead, the PLA captured several BM-21s during the 1979 Sino-Vietnam border conflict. After the war, these captured BM-21s were sent to research institutes for reverse engineering. Their first product, the truck mounted 122mm "Type 81," was first introduced in, now let me guess, "1981." You're dealing with a genius here.

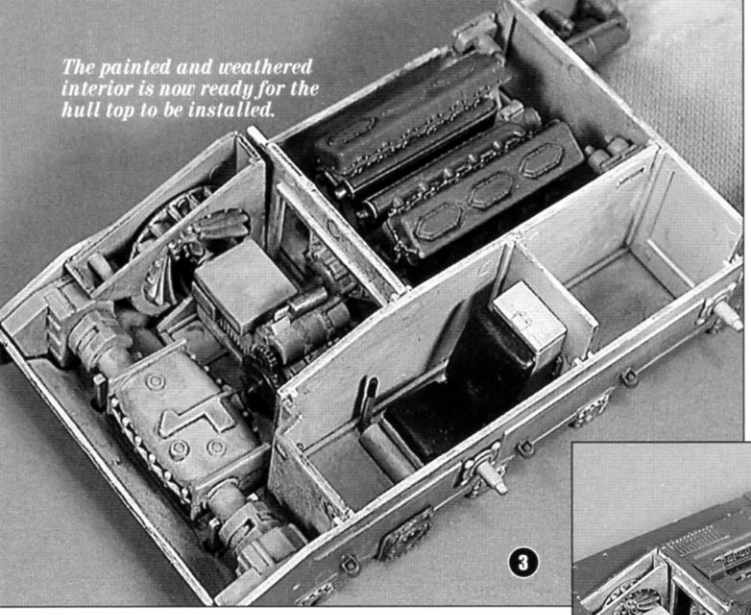
One big disadvantage of the MRL is that once it fires, it takes a long time to reload. And, because of the fire and smoke produced when firing it makes counter battery fire pretty easy. Therefore, an onboard reload is a highly desirable feature, so the next generation included this feature. This onboard reload capability is in both the Type 89 and Type 90 MRLs. The Type 90 being a truck mounted MRL that resembles the Czech MR-70 MRL.

Backing up a little, the next MRL the Chinese deployed was the Type 89 and it is unique in that it provides the crew with full armor protection and uses the Type 321 utility tracked chassis. This chassis is a modified tank chassis, which also is used for the Type 83 152mm self-propelled gun-howitzer and the Type 89 120 mm self-propelled anti-tank gun. The first good public view of the Type 89 MRL took place at an October 1999 parade in Beijing celebrating the 50th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. There are several photos I found on the web of an earlier version, or even a prototype of this MRL. It was also labeled as a Type 89, which clearly it is not. The two major differences are that the reload does not have a cover over the front, but more importantly there is no pulpit on the left side of the rocket launcher to mount the 12.7 mm machine gun.

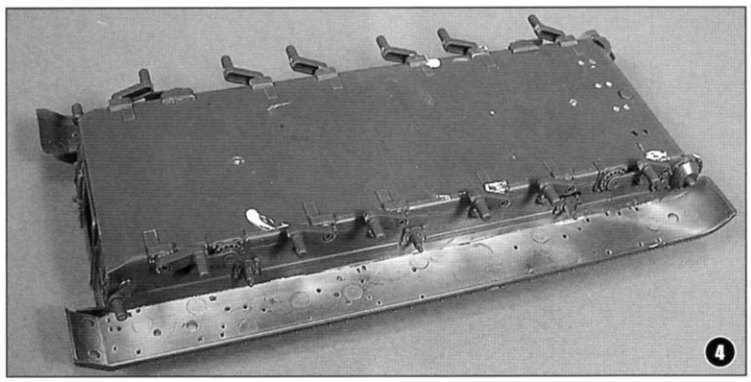


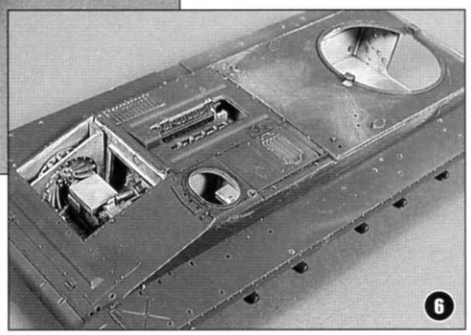


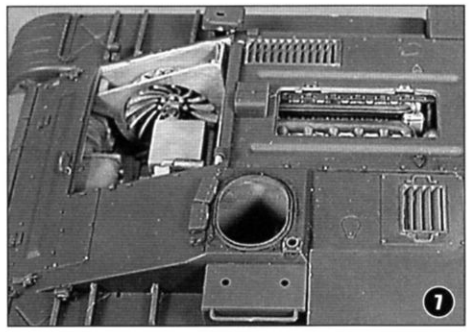
1. The hull partitions were glued in to permit painting. This includes the engine mount and rear hull. 2. The main automotive components, starting with the engine in the upper left corner going clockwise, are the fan, gearbox, compressor and transmission assembly.

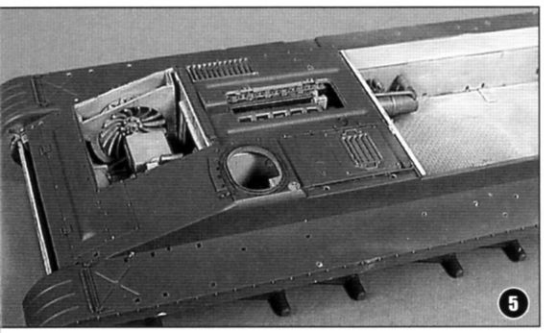


The painted and weathered interior is now ready for the hull top to be installed.

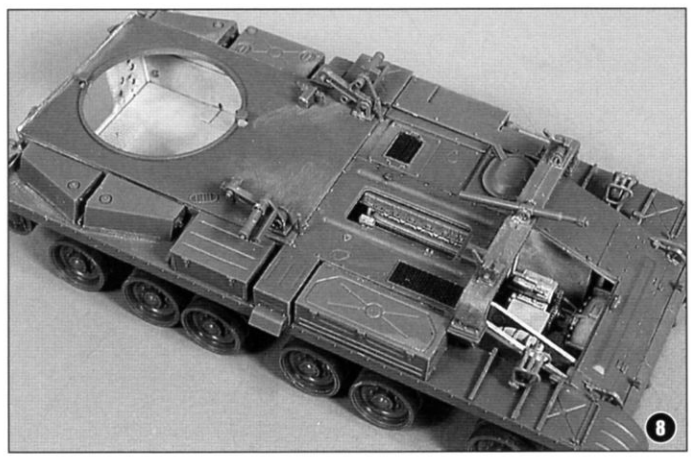








4. The axles went on without any trouble and the fit was so tight they really did not need gluing. 5. The hull top was pre-drilled, mainly for components that would go on the fenders. 6. The rear compartment top and front nosepiece went on with only minimal filling. 7. There are a number of boxes that go on the left fender. This is what all the predrilling was for. 8. The right fender also had a number of boxes to glue on. 9. The launcher assembly went together without any real problems, including a good fit for the tubes.



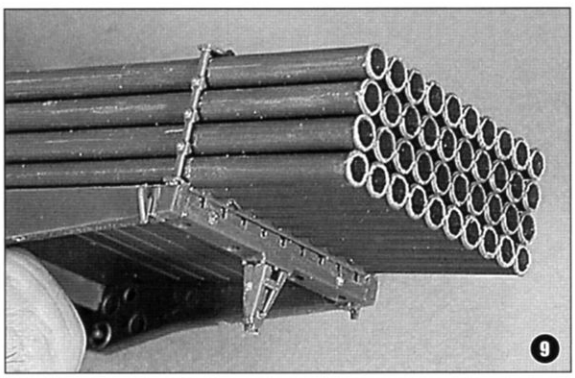
The Type 89 MRL has a primary 40-round launcher mounted on a turret on the rear of the chassis and a reload pack of 40 more rockets mounted centrally, for a total onboard load of 80 rockets. The driver is separated from the rest of the five-man crew in the forward section, to the left of the engine. The rest of the crew works out of the rear crew compartment underneath the launcher. The launcher can fire all 40 rockets off within 20 seconds and reload in three minutes. The 32-ton armored chassis has six road wheels on each side and is powered by the Type 12150L; a 520-hp turbo charged diesel engine. Computerized fire control and centralized anti-NBC protection systems enhance the Type 89's combat ability.

The Type 89 uses the Type 81 122mm High Explosive rocket. It is normally painted olive drab with black markings. Each 9.2-foot rocket weighs in at a hefty 66.8 kilograms (147.3 pounds). This rocket also has an Improved Conventional Munitions (ICM) fragmentation warhead (model unknown). The ICM warhead contains 4,100 steel balls (ouch!). The range of the rocket is between 20 and 30 kilometers.

The Type 89 equipped MRL Battalions are found in PLA armor divisions in the artillery regiment. The battalion consists of three batteries with six Type 89 MRL in each for a total of 18 in the battalion.

A Trumpeter kit that is not a copy

This is another great kit from Trumpeter and includes 10 sprues, plus the lower and upper hull sections. There are a total of 356 pieces, including screen mesh, poly caps and clear acetate for periscopes and rubber band tracks. Of course, decals and painting instructions only cover units in the Chinese Army, since no one else has any! The camouflage pattern is the same one seen in the 1999 parade, which is quite colorful and the one I used here. There is a bonus with this kit and the others in the series, in that you get a pretty decent interior. I absolutely love these instructions. Not only do they point out every detail that needs painting with the correct color, they also identify what the sub components are. I really find this useful when dealing with a kit that I have virtually no references for. I believe the instructions are the best of any kit manufacturer, including Tamiya.

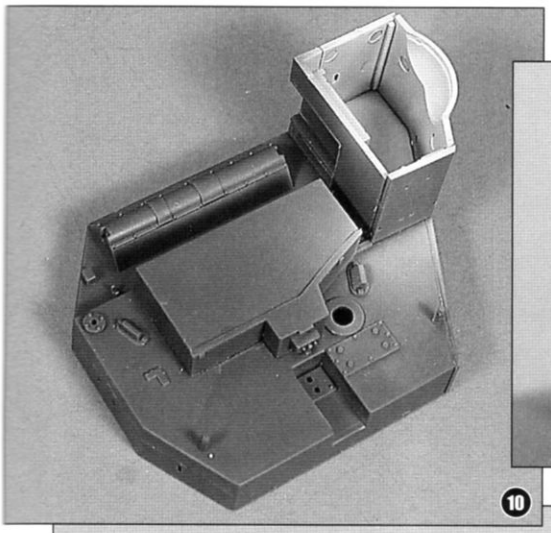


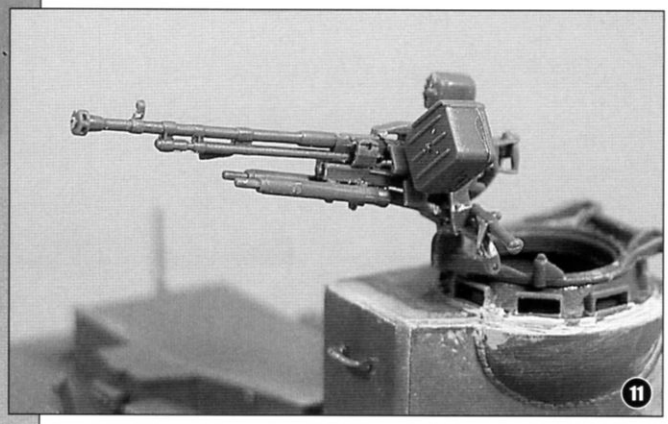
Nice interior

I started by assembling the interior components, like the engine, which has 32 pieces. The transmission, gearbox, compressor and driver's seat followed this. The engine head covers were a little tricky and I actually got one on backwards, but managed to correct it before the cement set. I jumped around a little and put all the interior wall partitions in, since I wanted to paint them at the same time. I sprayed the interior with Tamiya XF-2 flat white. I then painted all the components separately before mounting. The majority of the interior parts are supposed to be in a dark sea green color, which I gather is similar to a blue green. I mixed 85% Tamiya X-28 park green, 5% XF-2 flat white and 10% XF-18 medium blue, which looked close. Once everything was painted, I mounted all the components in the hull and gave it a wash of black oil paint. A little dry brushing with white and burnt umber oil paint and Rub n' Buff sliver finished the interior up.

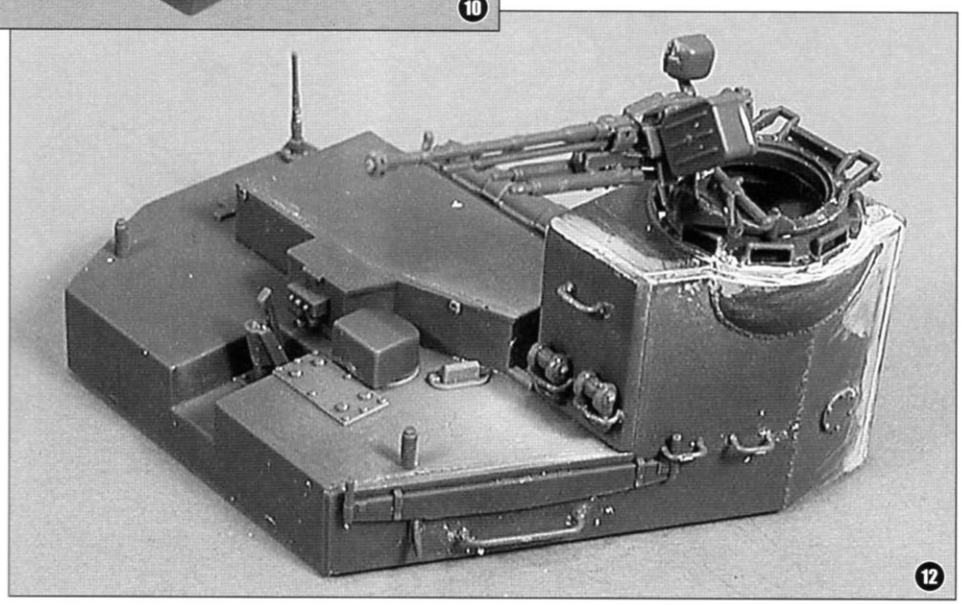
Suspension and hull stuff

Next it was the suspensions turn. More good news here, since the axles go in so tight that you really do not even need to glue them. I did, of course, but there is absolutely no play in them. I then assembled the road wheels, which are just like the





10. The turret was assembled, but I left the top off the pulpit so I could spray it with flat white. 11. The 12.7mm machine gun was a work of art and had 16 separate pieces. The only improvement I made was drilling out the barrel. 12. There are a number of grab handles on the turret, plus a large saw and pickax. 13. The magazine has an internal support, which makes assembly very easy.



Tamiya type, in that they use polycaps to fit in between the road wheel halves. A feature I really liked was the rough surface on the road wheel pads. The tracks are the older "melty" pin type, but the fit is great and after a little clean up they are ready. I left everything in the suspension loose, so I could remove them before painting.

After carefully drilling out all the necessary holes, I jumped ahead and glued the hull top and rear deck onto the chassis. These are clearly pointed out in the instructions. There was a little clean up and some minor filling required. I went through a complete evening of assembling the small boxes that go on the chassis. Again, the fit was very good with only a little filling needed. The fender supports were then fitted and glued from the bottom. I had planned to leave the model open once it was complete, so I did not attach any of the many hatches at this time. The main transmission hatch has a radiator, which was left separate until painting. A plastic mesh is provided for three different grills, including the main transmission hatch. I tried to use plastic glue but it did not hold, so I ended up using super glue to get the mesh to stick.

The headlight guards were assembled after I drilled out the headlights to receive MV lenses. These guards were a little difficult to line up and they did require some filling and sanding afterwards. The magazine bracket is a two-piece affair and here the fit was not great. I had to do some filling along the length of the seam. I did leave the engine access hatch off, along with the rear door. All those pre-assembled boxes, and there are a lot of them, were then glued on the fenders. This is what all those holes were drilled for.

Turning the hull over, I glued on the spade under the front and the support arms. The details on the rear were then added, including spare tracks and marker lights. Again, I left the rear door off.

Rockets galore

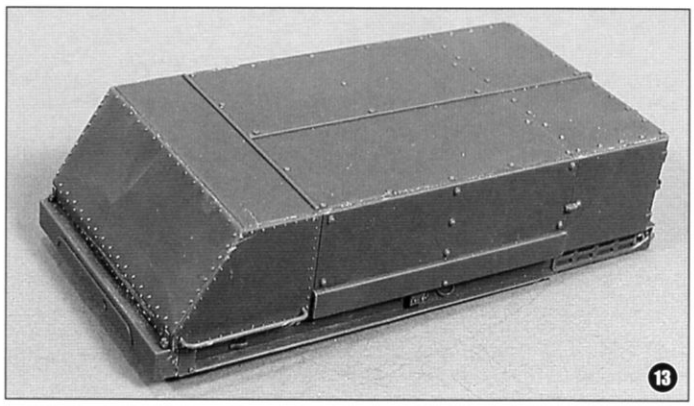
The rocket tubes were then glued together and allowed to dry. The fit is very good and as long as you check the instructions, you really cannot go wrong. Holding the tubes together, I ran liquid cement down the seams and once dry, I cleaned up the seams with my x-acto. The racks were then glued together and the rest of the pieces were glued on.

The 12.7mm machine gun is a work of art and consists of 16 pieces and actually has five steps to complete. The only extra thing I did was drill out the barrel. The turret was then built without any difficulty. There are a number of pieces that form the pulpit. I assembled all the sides, but left the top off. I then sprayed the interior with Tamiya XF-2 flat white and glued the top piece, G14, on. The kit provides thin clear acetate to put into the periscopes, but I really did not want them in before all the painting. There is a curious box on the turret, part E40, whose face is supposed to be painted blue. I am not clear what this is for, but it would seem strange to have an optical device sitting underneath the launcher. I cleaned up and glued all the remaining details to the turret.

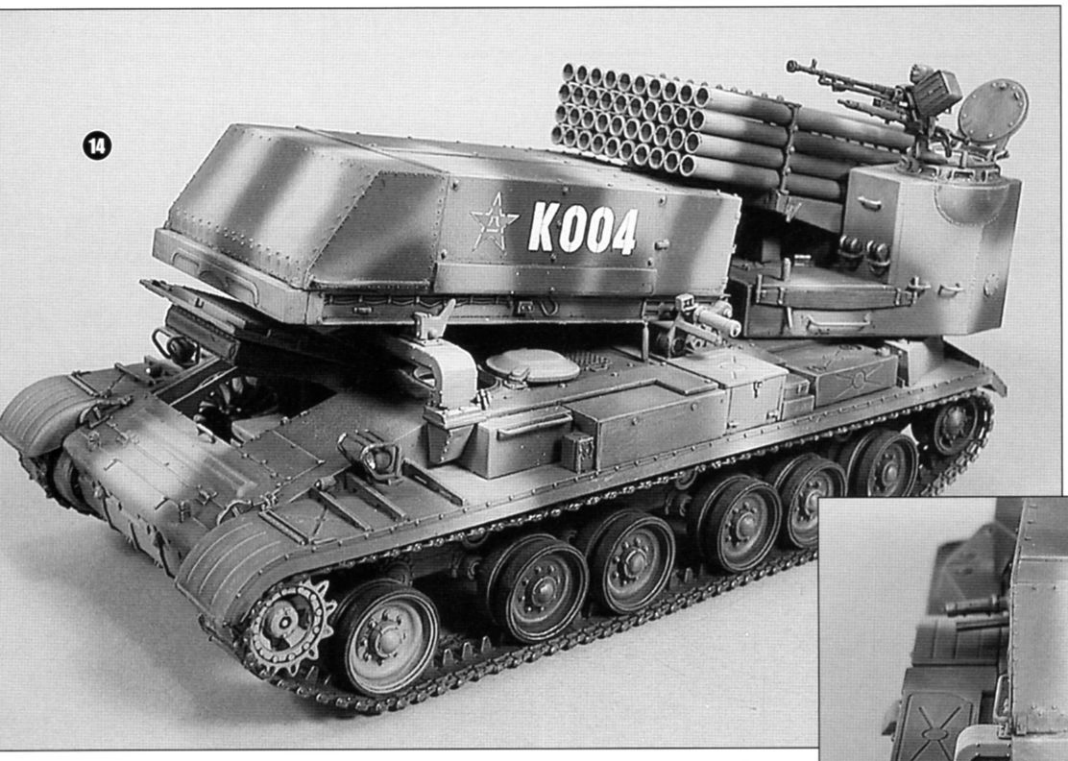
The magazine assembly is very straightforward and even includes internal supports. I had to do only minimal filling, since the fit was so good. I left the subassemblies off until after painting. At this stage, I had the hull, magazine, rocket launcher, turret, road wheels and return rollers all separate.

Everything except the whitewalls

I decided to paint my model like the ones paraded in Beijing in 1999, since this was the only scheme I am aware of. The box art and instructions also cover this version. So, what am I to do but follow the only example I had? The good news is it is not a hard edge camouflage pattern. This helps since this is one complicated paint job because of all the pieces. Unfortunately, the instructions only give Mr. Gunze colors. I have no source for these, so I used Tamiya paints instead. After the usual wash in warm soapy water, I sprayed the entire model with a mixture of 75% Tamiya XF-60 desert yellow and 25% XF-2 white, which seems to match the photos exactly. The road wheels, idler and return rollers were put on toothpicks and painted XF-1 flat black. For the dark green color, I found that the Tamiya XF-11 J.N. green was spot on, so I painted the first camouflage pattern using it. For the second green, which the instructions say is Russian green, I found that the XF-5 flat green worked fine. For the road wheels and return rollers, I used masks to paint the centers. The small items were then painted, mainly with Vallejo paints. This included the 12.7mm machine gun, saw, pickax and other items. You could paint the road wheels with a white band on them but I was not brave enough, and besides, I think it kinda looks dumb.



The tracks were first painted with thinned down Model Master rust. This was wiped off before the paint dried to remove most of the rust color from the track pads. I then gave them a wash of



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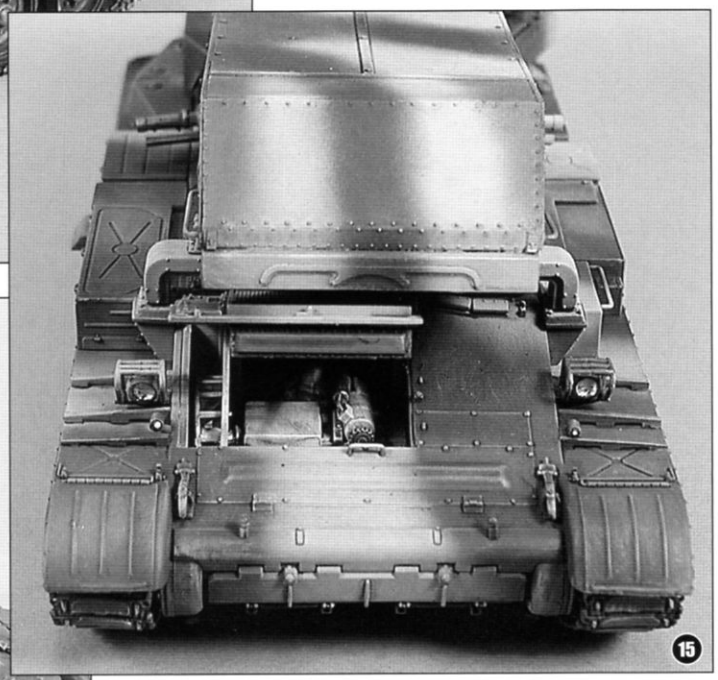
14. The decals went on without any trouble. I did avoid the large bolt heads on the magazine. 15. I used MV lenses for the headlights and painted the marker lights white. 16. I left all the hatches open, so the interior work could be seen. Components like the rocket launcher pack and magazine went on without any problems after painting was complete. 17. One area where I did not follow the kit color-painting guide was the inside of the rear door and hatch in the pulpit.

with red. Using Microscale Krystal Kleer, I filled in the periscopes in the cupola.

Results

This is another example of the increasing quality of the Trumpeter kits. Although the detailing of some parts is better than others and some parts fit together better than others, the overall quality is quite remarkable. This is especially true when you take into consideration the complexity of this kit. I highly recommend this one for those interested in rather unusual and colorful subjects.

—Jim Hensley



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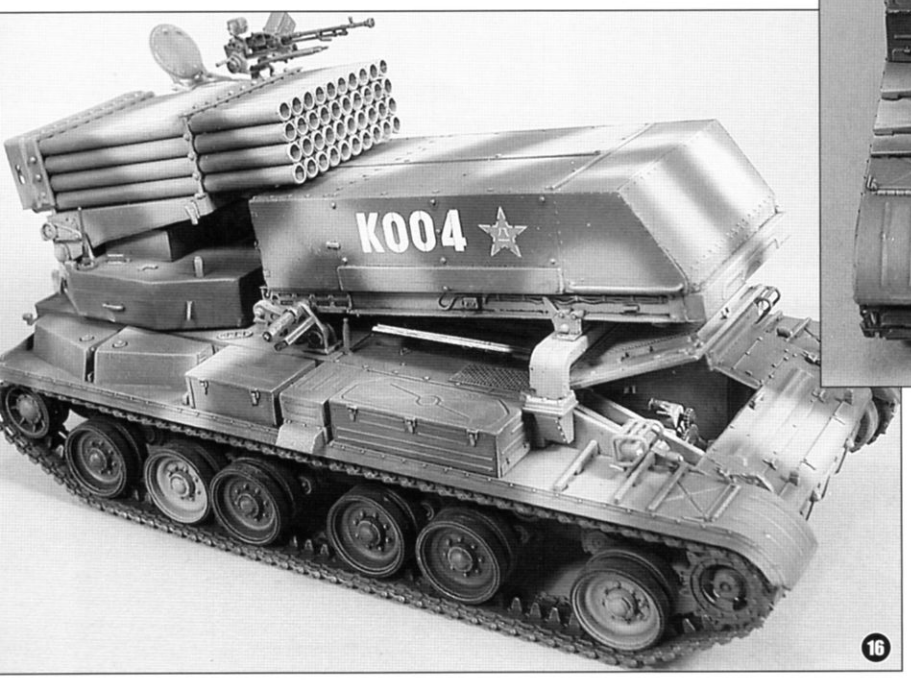

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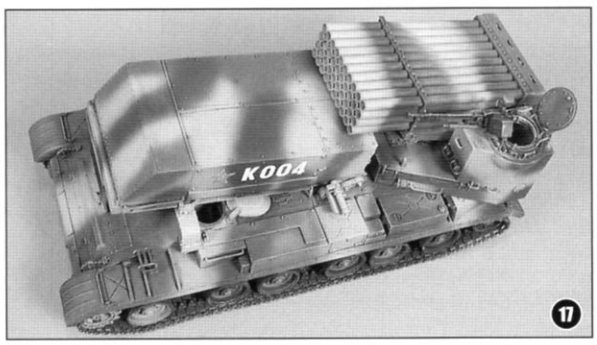

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very thin Tamiya XF-1 flat black. For the decals, I first sprayed the magazine sides and the rear door with Tamiya clear, then applied the decals. These are great decals and need no trimming. The only puzzling thing is that, according to the instructions, there are three places where you are supposed to put the large red stars, but only two are provided. I left the one off the front of the magazine, since the Type 89's in the parade did not have them there either. You are given separate numbers so you can create any combination you want. I used a little Microscale Micro Sol to set the decals. I then sprayed the whole model with Polly Scale clear flat.

I only wanted to weather the MRL a little, so I used a thin wash of black oil paint first. I then dry brushed with white, sap green and burnt umber oils. For the tracks and some metal objects I used Rub n' Buff silver.

Putting it all together

I now put the tracks on. The tracks are a little tight, which keeps them off the return rollers, so I super glued them down. All the hatches were then glued open and I slid the magazine into its mount. The launcher was then glued to the turret. The MV L 128 clear lenses were glued into the headlights. I also painted the marker lights on the front with white paint and on the rear

MMiR RECCE

Trumpeter Chinese Multiple Rocket Launcher. Kit number 0307. Suggested retail price $24.95. Kit graciously provided by Trumpeter's U.S. import agent, Stevens International.

References

References are very slim and the only ones I found were various Internet sites. If anyone else has a good source, please drop the editor a line.

OH NO, NOT ANOTHER KUBEL!

This is one of those very rare birds that makes you wonder why anyone would ever represent as a kit. Of course, it is a German truck, but even so it is really a Canadian truck that the Germans turned into a touring car. Anyway, they did and here it is. Apparently when the British left Greece in a hurry back in 1941, they left some of their stuff behind. This included some Canadian Military Pattern (CMP) Ford F15 15 cwt 4x2 15 cwt trucks with a number 12 style cab. At the end of 1941 at least 15 of these were taken to the cool dudes in the German 659th Army Engineer Battalion (motorized) "chop shop" in Athens and converted into cross-country touring cars that were designated Kfz.15 (makeshift).

Somehow the 659th guys were persuaded to turn these 15 trucks over to the German 666th (lucky number huh!) Pioneer Battalion in time for Operation Barbarossa. The 666th Pioneer Battalion had wandered down with the rest of German XXXXth Corps during the invasion of Greece in April 1941. It was actually directly attached to the Corps headquarters.

The Schiffer book referenced below shows four of these converted vehicles with three of their license plate numbers visible, including WH663581, WH470618, and WH537334. Additionally, the battalion tactical sign was three white sixes in a circle on the front fender on the driver's side (remember these were right hand drive vehicles). I gather the Germans are not aware of the significance of three sixes. Of course, this was before the movie "The Omen." In the same book there is also a crude drawing dated 24 December 1941. This was probably used to guide the conversion of the trucks and was probably drawn by someone in the 659th.

The 15 cwt class of vehicle was the most common of the lighter trucks that were introduced into British service in the early 1930s. With a relatively low profile and an approximate 1-ton payload, these vehicles were common to every arm and level of the military. Both General Motors Canadian Division and Ford of Canada built the CMP trucks. Approximately 34,195 of this particular model were produced during the war. The Ford F15 had a V8 90 degree L head side valve gasoline engine with 95 hp. The manual transmission had four forward speeds and one reverse.

I also found three photographs of a Kübel in the Ground Power number 21 book. Unfortunately, they do not say where they were taken and so I can only guess Russia or maybe Greece. The terrain is rather desert looking and the troops are in shorts.

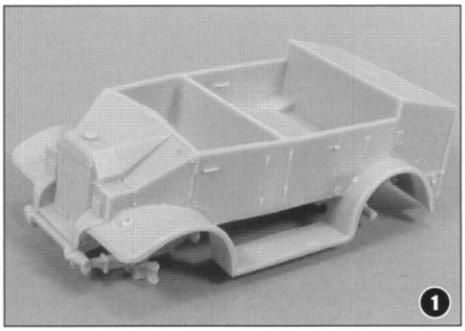
A Romanian resin model

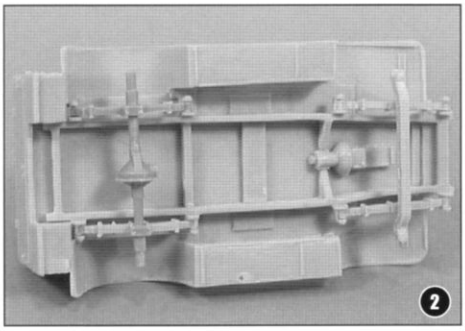
I have to admit this is the first kit that I've built from Ploesti, Romania. The kit is 100% resin cast in a light gray color. It consists of 54 parts and is rather a simple kit to build. There are a few pour plugs to remove, the worst being the rear of the chassis. The casting is good, although a few of the door handles on mine were broken. The tires have raised lettering, including the word "Dunlop," which I think is pretty cool. The instructions are rather simple, but with this kit it is not a problem.

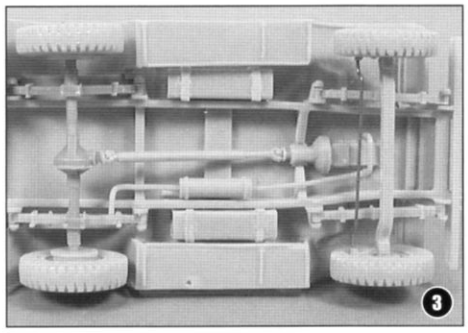
1-2-3, this is easy

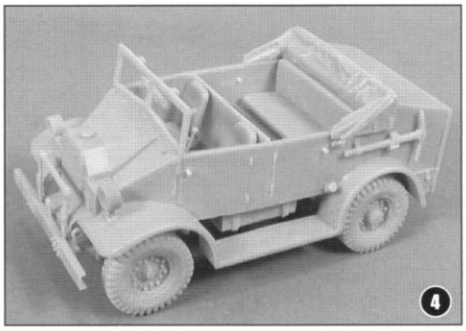
The first step was to remove all the pieces from their pour plugs. The chassis is one piece and it took a little sawing to remove the plug on the rear. There is a complete piece that goes on the rear, which covers the entire area of the plug, so you don't need to clean up too much.

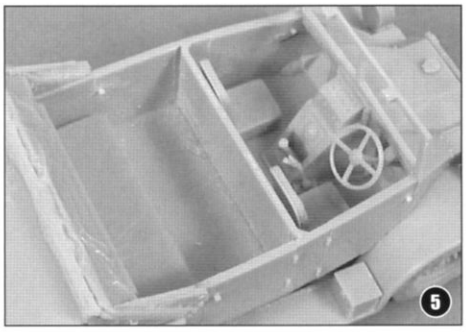
I then glued on the one-piece frame to the bottom of the chassis. The springs were next and then

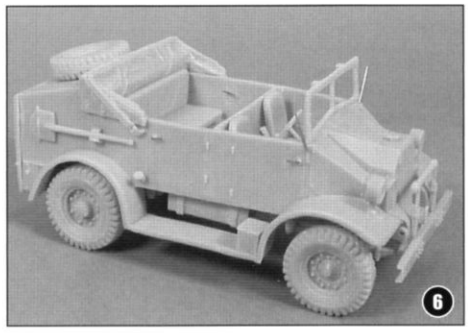


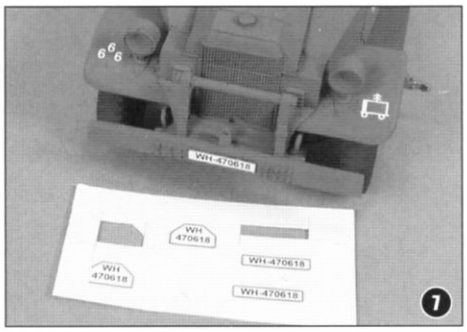












1. The hull was in one piece, but had a large pour plug on the rear. Most of the molding was very good, except the door handles. 2. The frame was glued on, then the basic pieces like the springs and axles were added. 3. The completed suspension. The brass wire tie rod was added since there was not one furnished in the kit. The hole in the running board was later filled. 4. The basic work is not complete. The door handles were cut off and replaced with styrene rod and scrap photo-etch handles were made. 5. The interior is pretty complete with a molded on instrument panel and pedals. The steering wheel column was too long and had to be cut down a little. 6. Here the door handles have been added and the arms for the two rear view mirrors are attached. 7. To make the correct license plates, I scanned in blank ones and used Corel Draw to add the numbers. The Pioneer Battalion symbol and German crosses are from Archer. The three sixes were from a small dry transfer number set.

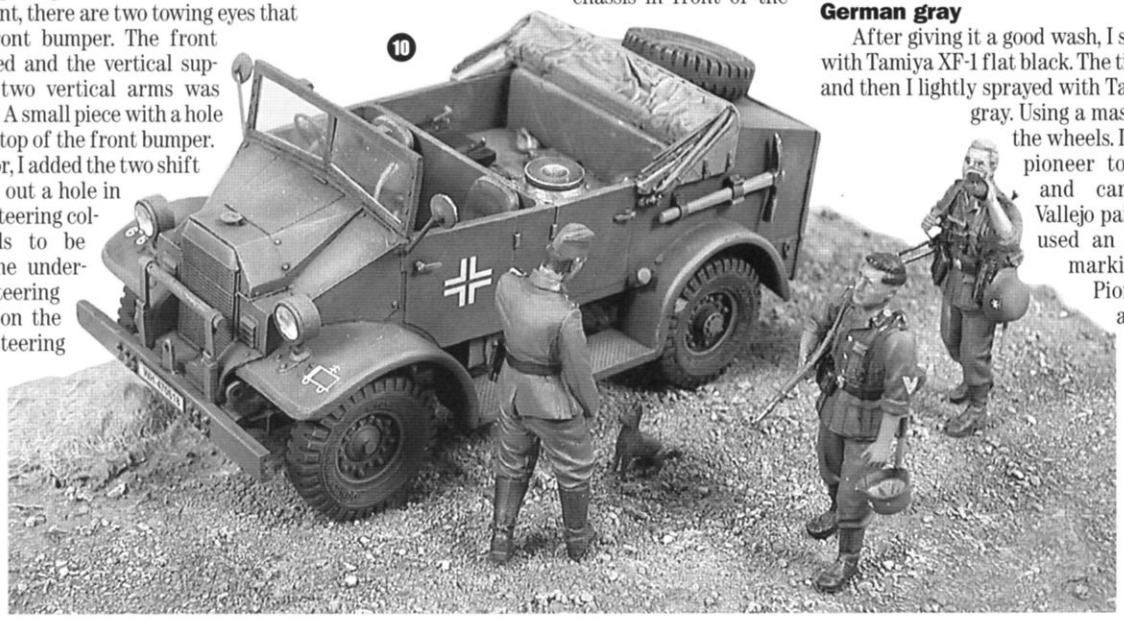
the two axles. The rest of the details for the undercarriage were then added. Then exhaust pipe, muffler and drive shaft were glued on. The two fuel tanks were added underneath the chassis, just inboard from the running boards. The tires were glued on and a piece of brass wire was added to the front for the tie rod. The mount points for the tie rod were present, but for some reason, no rods were included in the kit.

The rear spring bumper and tow hook were then added. For the front, there are two towing eyes that go behind the front bumper. The front bumper was added and the vertical support piece with two vertical arms was glued on behind it. A small piece with a hole in it was glued on top of the front bumper.

For the interior, I added the two shift levers and drilled out a hole in the floor for the steering column. This needs to be mounted from the underside, since the steering housing is glued on the bottom of it. The steering column had to be cut back a little, since it was too long. The door handles were poorly made and several were already partially broken, so I decided to replace them. I first cut off what was left and then drilled a hole in each door. I glued a piece of styrene rod in each one and trimmed them back to glue the handles on. I found some reasonable handles from my photo-etch scrap box and glued them on.

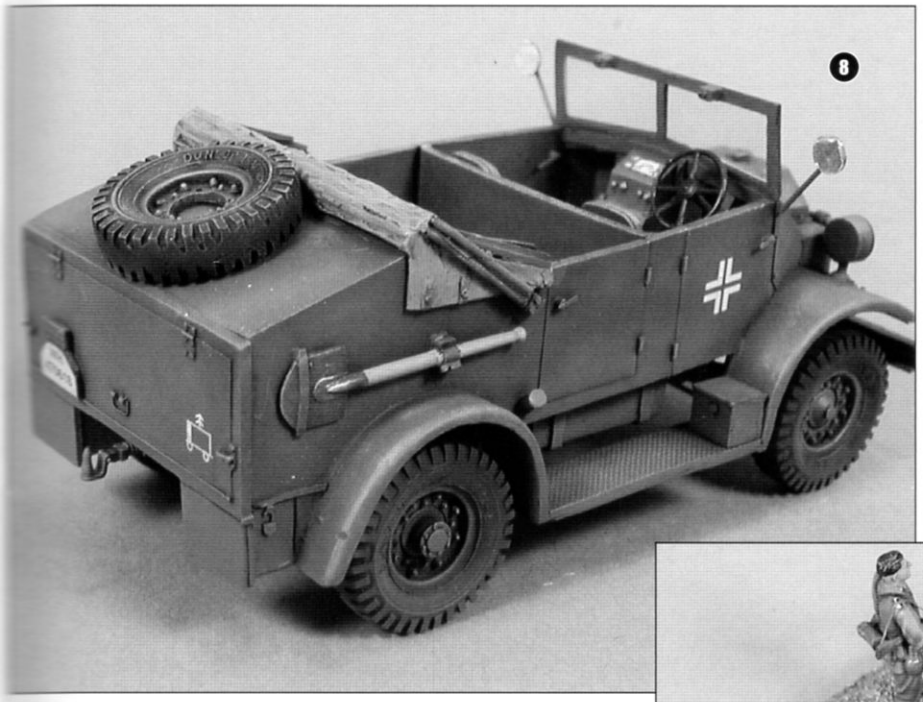
The front and rear seats were glued in and the canvas top was glued to the back. I drilled out the hole for the spare tire, but left the tire off until after painting. The windshield was cleaned up and glued on. The large headlights were drilled out to accept MV lenses then glued on. There are two gas tank filler caps that go on either side of the rear chassis in front of the rear fenders. The shovel and pickax were glued on their spots on the sides. There is a single storage box that goes on the right side on the front of the fender, which is not in the instructions but is in one of the reference photos.

The last things I added were the mounts for the two rear view mirrors. The mirrors are furnished, but not the arms. I made the arms out of brass wire. I took a very thin wire and ran it through a small hollow brass tube. I drilled out a hole at the base of the windshield and glued the arms on. I left the mirrors off until after painting so I could put some self-adhesive foil on them.

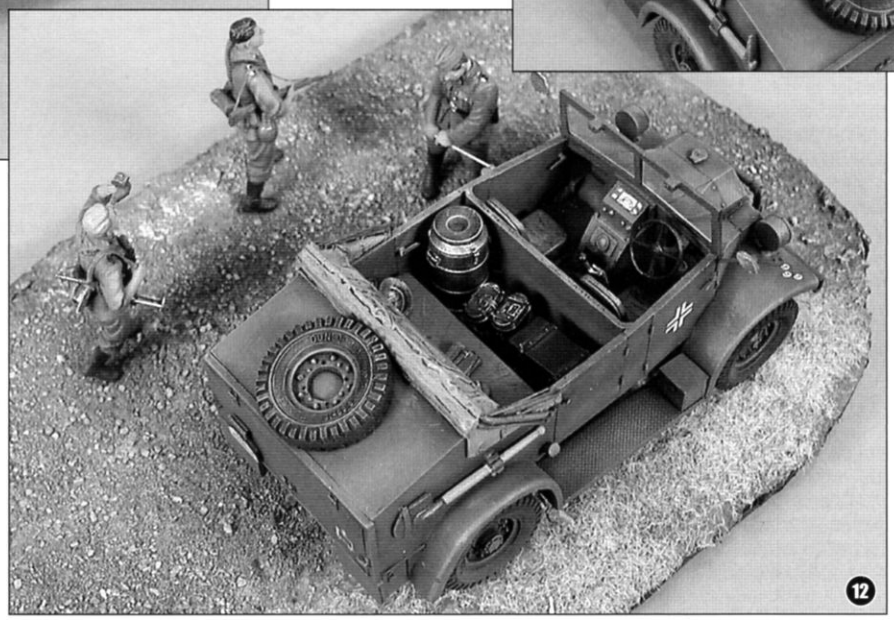


German gray

After giving it a good wash, I sprayed the truck with Tamiya XF-1 flat black. The tires were masked and then I lightly sprayed with Tamiya XF-24 dark gray. Using a mask, I then sprayed the wheels. I then painted the pioneer tools, seat covers and canvas top with Vallejo paints. For decals, I used an Archer tactical markings set for the Pioneer Battalion and the white crosses, plus a letter set for the three sixes on the fender. For the vehicle license plates, I tried to use an old set of Archer's German license plates



8. The model was sprayed with Tamiya paints and the seats, top and tools were painted with Vallejo paints. 9. Part of the jack was glued onto the model before painting. The model was dry brushed with white and black oil paints. 10. The figures are from DML and Royal Models. They were painted with a combination of oil and Vallejo paints. The rank insignia is from Archer. 11. The base was made from sheet Styrofoam and covered with tile grout and Celluclay. Static grass was added to the roadside. 12. The headlights are MV L209 lenses and the windshields are made from clear styrene. The stuff inside is from several Verlinden accessory sets.



but the numbers would not rub off onto the plates, so I decided to make my own. I first scanned the blank plates from the Archer set, then using Corel Draw, I put on the numbers WH470618. This was one of the three known plates mentioned above. I printed them out on Micro-Mark white inkjet decal paper. The plates were then sprayed with the Micro-Mark fixer. I was going to put the decals on some other material but decided to just cut them out and glue them directly to the vehicle after I had painted the edges with black paint. Actually, they came out rather good. In hindsight I could have used regular photo quality paper to accomplish the same thing.

I then started the weathering process by first spraying the truck with a flat clear acrylic paint to seal the decals. A thin wash of black oil paint was then applied and left to dry. I was careful not to get any on the license plates. I then dry brushed the truck with titanium white and black oil paint. Last, I lightly sprayed the bottom with Tamiya XF-52 flat earth. The L 209 MV clear lenses were glued into the headlights and the tools were dry brushed with Rub n' Buff silver. I made the windshields out of clear styrene. None came with the kit. I used Micro-Mark Bare Metal Foil to cover the rearview mirrors and then glued them on.

Fixing a flat tire

For one of the figures I used a Royal Model figure that is changing a tire. I also added two German infantry figures walking along from DML's German Infantry set for Barbarossa. They were all built straight from the box, although I added a helmet liner for one of the infantryman who is carrying his helmet. The liner comes from an ABER set, which is pretty cool. I did have to drill out the helmet first with my Dremel tool. The figures' faces and arms were painted with oils and their uniforms were painted with Vallejo paints. I filled the truck with a few goodies from several Verlinden German accessory sets.

The base was made from sheet Styrofoam used on railroad layouts. I covered it with a mix of tile grout and Celluclay, which had been mixed with acrylic burnt umber paint. Gravel and small rocks were sprinkled around the road and then everything was given a wash of more acrylic burnt umber. After everything was dry I dry brushed with titanium white and yellow ochre. The shoulder of the road was sprinkled with a mixture of static grass.

Final thoughts

This actually was kind of a fun kit to build and went together pretty fast. When I first got the kit, I thought I was going to have to build it without any reference material. For me, this is just unacceptable. Anyway, I was lucky and managed to find just enough to build it. By most standards today this is a fairly crude kit, but I sure have built worse! I have to admit, I really like the results. I highly recommend this little guy if you want something out of the ordinary in your collection.

—Jim Hensley

MMiR RECCE

Wespe Models C.M.P-15cwt "Kübel." Kit number 35011, 23 North Balcescu Street, 2000 Ploiesti, Romania.

References

Ground Power No. 21, W.W. II German Military Vehicles #7, Delta Publishing Co., Ltd. Tokyo, Japan, Feb 96. There are three very good photos of the Kübel deployed.

Frank, Reinhard. *Ford At War*, Schiffer Military History Vol 68, Atglen, PA, 1993, ISBN 0-88740-480-4. One photo of the converted trucks showing the markings and a rough drawing are in this book.

A Peek at What's New on the Figure Front!

MiniMen

Corpus

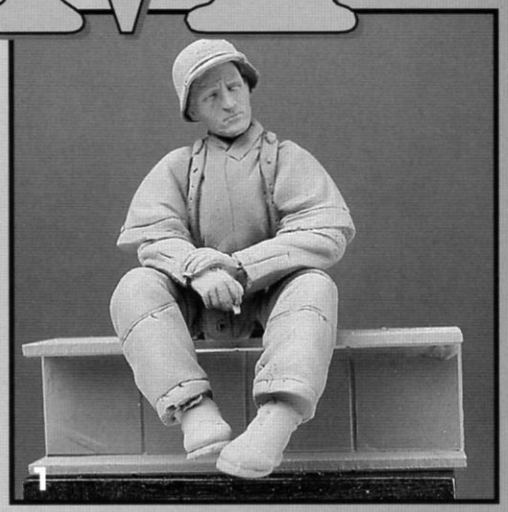
You're out of order! No you're out of order! The whole trial is out of order! Well, actually just this review is out of order. You see, we've been getting these cool new Corpus figures out of numeral order, so we are showing you one of the first with **35001, Waffen SS Sitting (1)**. This crazy dude strikes a casual, sitting pose. He wears a Zeltbahn tent quarter over his upper body, along with the standard field gray winter trousers. These are worn unbloused over black leather boots. A great little one-piece casting, too.

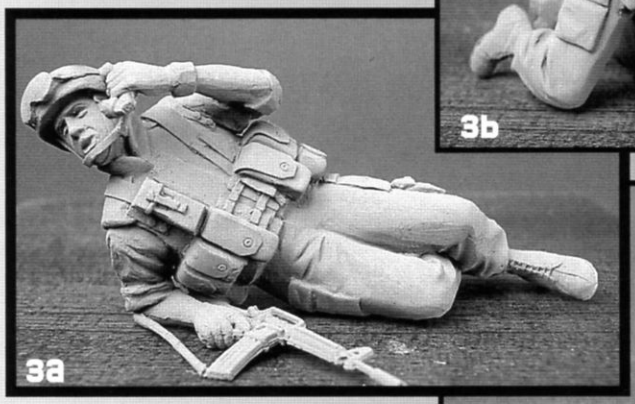
35003, German Infantry Officer (2), is another neat single piece. This officer wears the M1935 field gray great coat and a scarf around his neck. His feldmütze has the stiffener removed and black leather jackboots finish him up. He has a great look and his coat is very subtlty tattered along its lower edge. This would be a great one for a winter scene, perhaps paired up with some of the Wolf line of overcoated Germans.

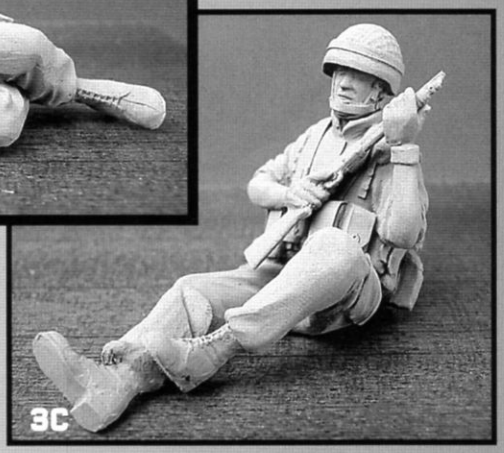
Dream Catcher

DC 54006, Under Fire (3), is another exciting Middle East scenario in a box. This is an excellent follow-up to Dream Catcher's earlier set depicting a wounded Israeli soldier. Throw in a couple of the older VP Israelis and you've got yourself a diorama. It also strikes us that these guys would look great with the Academy M151 IDF Shmira. Why, heck, they are even shown on the box top with one! The uniforms are the standard Israeli combat dress of olive green shirt and trousers tucked into brown leather boots. Flak jackets are worn and Israeli webbing (defined by the broad shoulder straps and lace connectors) is worn. The weapons are an ex-soviet RPG, sawed off shotgun and an American Colt M4 carbine.

Good show guys. More, please!

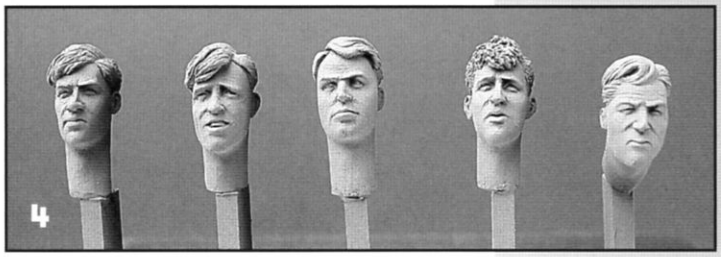






Hornet

OK, we have to say it. There is one major problem with Hornet heads. Not many figures actually deserve one. Yes, few are indeed worthy. Think very carefully and when you do think about **HH2, five different heads with 1940s**



style haircuts (4). These are five brand new character heads with bushy topped haircuts. This style is a bit more generic than some of the other bare Hornet heads and would be suitable for U.S., Russian or any other nationality. They are also a bit reminiscent of the hair-dos seen in the field in Vietnam, very bushy on top and cropped on the side. A highly versatile set.

HFH 04, five heads wearing French WW2 tank crew helmets (5), gives us five Gallic-looking fellows all buttoned-up and ready for a ride. Before you say, "there are no French figures!" Remember this: the French tanker's helmet was coveted among U.S. tankers and was a fairly common sight, especially with some of the earlier Pershing crews. You see, the U.S. "football" helmet offered no ballistic protection while the French helmet did. Very handy when the shrapnel starts flying!

Lincoln Country Line

Lincoln Country Line, VLS' budget-minded figure arm has one new one up this time. **LC 0009, German Wehrmacht Troops (6)** gives us a real simple, but nice duo helping each other do the cancer stick thing. The helmeted "smokee" soldier has on the field gray tunic and trousers, black leather belt with ammo pouches, bread bag and mess kit. Our smoker buddy is decked out in the forage cap and the greatcoat is worn with a black leather belt around the waist. Both dudes wear black leather jackboots.

MIG Productions

Hey, MIG is doing figures! To dovetail in with their current Russian theme, they now offer **MP 35-044, WWII Soviet Tank Crew (7)**. This set has two half figures for the Soviet tank turret of your choice. The box top shows them riding a model 1943 turret with a cupola, but we'd guess you'd have no difficulty sticking them in anything with a Red star on the turret.

The tank commander, who seems to be pretty pissed of at something or somebody, has on the winter issue black leather jacket and brown leather belt with a pistol case. "Stop adding so much glue to the suspension—you dopes!"

The gunner is a bit more relaxed and wears the distinctive Telogreika quilted khaki winter jacket. Both figures sport the black canvas tanker's helmet.

The pair is very well rendered in resin and would make a handsome addition to your next commie tank.

Mirage Hobby

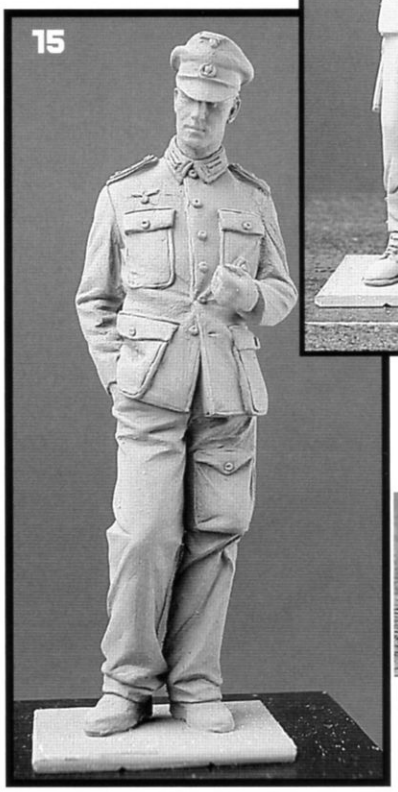
Here's somebody we don't review every day. Oh wait, we've never reviewed figures from Mirage before. OK then, first up is **513 35001, Polish 10th Cavalry (Motorized) Officer 1939 (8)**. This is an interesting little casting depicted with the black leather tanker's jacket worn over the khaki uniform with black leather high boots. The Polish tanker's jacket was similar to the French and Italian item and was cut long on the thigh. Interestingly, The 10th Motorized Brigade retained the M1916 German helmet, which gives him sort of an odd look. The rest of his gear consists of a brown leather pistol belt with map case, and the ViS pistol and holster.

Next up is **516 35004, Polish Infantryman 1939 Szeregowiec 1939 (9)**. This dudeski wears the standard Polish infantry dress composed of the M1931 type helmet, model 1936 winter issue wool uniform with short ankle-puttees and the M1934 model boots. Brown leather suspenders, ammo pouches, bread bag and knapsack round him out. The rifle is the Polish-made version of the Mauser K98. Two very interesting and unusual subjects.

Modeling Artisan Mori

It's always exciting to see what 'ol Mori's got goin' on. The first of the two latest is **MR001, Russian Tanker, Winter (10)**. He is posed very casually against the side of a turret and turning back—a very effective pose and pulled off well. The figure is sculpted wearing the 1940 pattern Ushanka (winter pile cap) and Polaschubuk (sheep skin coat) worn over khaki pants and black leather boots. The 1943 pattern brown leather belt and a holstered Tokarev pistol point to him being a vehicle commander. Hey, maybe he's turning around to see what that MIG figure is yelling about.

There have been some terrific German pieces in the Mori line and **MG019, German SS corporal (11)**, is no exception. The corporal wears the M1935 field gray great coat and is very simply posed with a cigarette in his right hand. He wears the issue 6x30 binoculars around his neck and a black leather belt with pistol holster around his waist. His field cap is the 2nd SS camouflage pattern with the "Totenkopf" symbol pinned to the front. The trousers are worn over the boots, an interesting variation, and could be painted in a number of different ways.

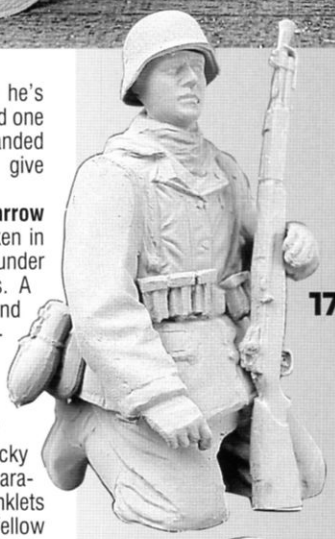


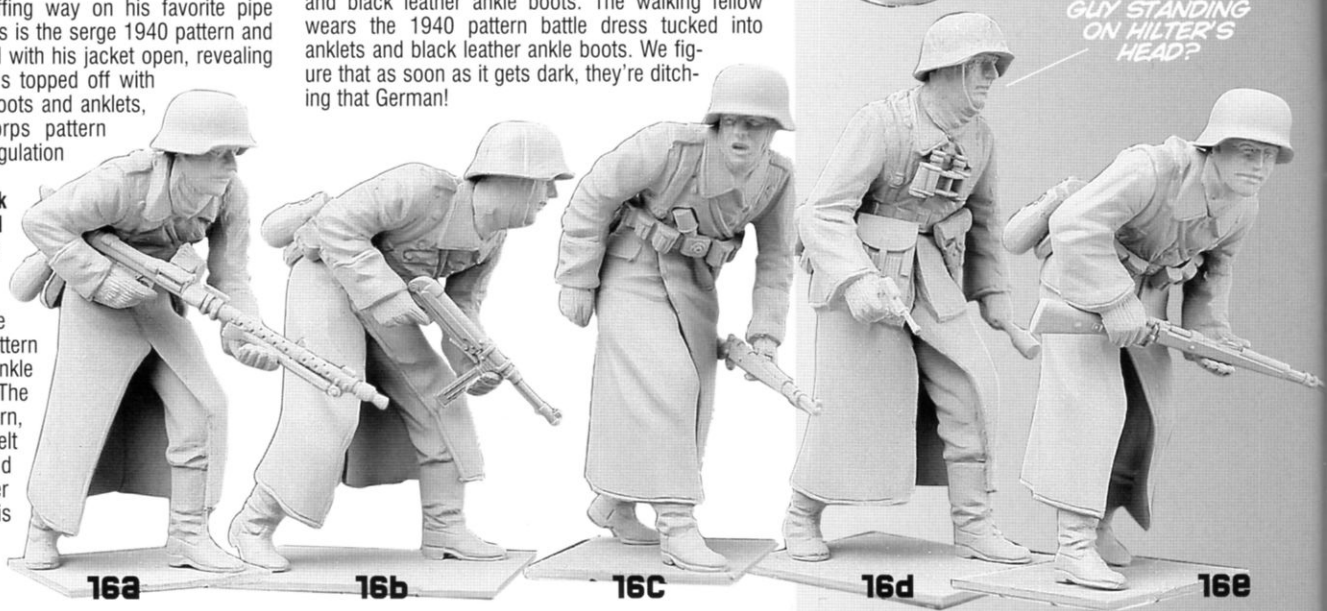
Resicast

There is normally a torrent of British figure releases from Resicast and we catch up when we can! **35 578, Tank officer at ease smoking pipe (12)** is just that. He's just your average bloke wearing a field service cap and puffing way on his favorite pipe weed. His battle dress is the serge 1940 pattern and he has been sculpted with his jacket open, revealing his shirt and tie. He's topped off with black leather ankle boots and anklets, Royal Armoured corps pattern 1942 holster and regulation revolver.

35 579, Tank officer with pistol "Dieppe" (13) is looking a bit on the cautious side. He also wears the battle dress serge 1940 pattern with black leather ankle boots and anklets. The black beret is also worn, along with a pistol belt with holster and 12-cartridge revolver case. He carries his faithful No2 Mk.1 revolver in his right hand. Maybe he's waiting behind one of those stranded Churchills to give his captors a nasty surprise!

35580, POW 2 British soldier with wheel barrow & German guard (14) is based on a photo taken in France in July of '44 of two British POW's under guard while delivering rations to the Germans. A couple of Tiger II's are napping in the background of the photo. The German guard wears the standard field gray tunic and trousers tucked into anklets and black leather ankle boots. Also standard is the black leather belt with ammo pouches and bayonet. He's armed with a Kar 98. The Brit pushing the wheelbarrow is lucky enough to have a cardigan tucked into his parachutist trousers that are further tucked into anklets and black leather ankle boots. The walking fellow wears the 1940 pattern battle dress tucked into anklets and black leather ankle boots. We figure that as soon as it gets dark, they're ditching that German!





Resination

I'm sorry, but I must submit my Resination… Sorry. Looky here, a new figure from a new company. Or, at least the first that we've seen. **3535, Wehrmacht Artillery NCO WWII (15)** is a long drink of water, which is neat right off the bat. Most sculptors ignore varying statures completely. Our big buddy is decked out in the M1942 reed green tunic. He also wears the five pocket reed green denim trousers. This is normally part of the two-piece Panzertruppen uniform. His Feldmütze is worn with the stiffener removed (and we all know how painful that can be).

An excellent sculpture and there's nothing that says he can't be just about any branch of service.

We look forward to seeing others in the series.

Tamiya

Once upon a time, Tamiya was cranking out a whole slew of figure sets. The quality was good for the day, but these sets receded pretty quickly in the face of resin and some of the more detailed plastic sets. Nowadays, when the big T lets loose with a figure set, it's an occasion. And so we come to **35256, German Assault Infantry w/Winter Gear (16)**. This five-figure set is great for many different settings when you need a group of guys moving with caution during the first winter. Everyone's uniform and equipment pretty much points to '41/'42. They all have on the standard German combat gear of that time period. The field gray great coat—two have white smocks over the coat and helmet covers (although it's said that this cannot be done with the real garments. Try it at home…). The equipment is the basic combat issue made up of black leather belt, suspenders, ammo pouches, canteen, bread bag, mess kit, shovel and gas mask. The NCO (presumably) has a pair of binos, map case and pistol. The weapons carried range from the MG34, MP40, Kar98 to the Walter pistol.

The animation of these five guys is a bit more than we have seen from Tamiya. The turning rifleman, number three in the instructions, is particularly impressive.

Hey Panzer III! Wait for us!

Tristar

Hey, what's going on with these guys? They've been releasing a ton of really cool figure sets that continually push the edge when it comes to accuracy and sculpting quality. That's something we expect from resin, not plastic. And yet, plastic they are!

The latest two sets create a complete "gruppe" to ride a Panther, or perhaps even a Tiger II or Panzer IV. They are **004, German Panzer Grenadiers Set Vol.1 (17)** and **005 German Panzer Grenadiers Set Vol.2 (18)**. Let's take a look at them together. The majority of the figures have on the WH splinter pattern camo reversible uniform. One figure from set 004 wears a Wehrmacht pattern smock over a great coat. The seated MG gunner from set 005 wears only the great coat (presumably with a uniform underneath). All the figures are depicted wearing black leather ankle boots, some with the anklets and some with the trousers bloused. Baklavas are worn by all, with a single guy wearing his around the neck. The equipment consists of basic combat load—black leather belt, suspenders, ammo pouches, canteen, bread bag, mess kit, shovel and MG maintenance kit. The weapons carried are

MG42, Kar98, G43 and MP44.

Posing and animation are rather astounding for plastic—or resin. All of the figures have a very natural feel and hold their weapons in a convincing manner. You'll have a blast with these guys as is, or using them as a basis for conversions. Definitely buy both together.

Verlinden

Back is the USS, back the USS, back in the USSR! Hey, the Russians are coming! Oh wait, they're already here! We love it when our buddies at VP go off on a theme. Can you gues what the theme is here? The first set, **1895, Russian Tankman WWII (19)** is an interesting duo. The first rather introspective looking tanker wears the khaki one-piece overall with brown leather belt and holster for his Korovine pistol. The second tanker has his foot resting on a bust of the fallen Führer. He wears a khaki padded jacket with black trousers and leather boots. A brown leather belt and khaki ammo pouch for the PPS-43 sub machine gun is around his waist. Both figures wear the black canvas tanker's helmet.

It's party time! **1896, Soviet Officers WWII (20)**, is two rather happy officers sharing a bottle of some kind of alcohol. We suspect that it may just be Vodka. The Shapkaushanka flapped fleece cap is worn by the officer, along with the scarlet piped great coat. The other officer wears the 1943 pattern Gymnastiorka trousers and both in khaki. They both have brown leather belts, holsters, map case and a ammo pouch for the PPsH-41 sub machine gun.

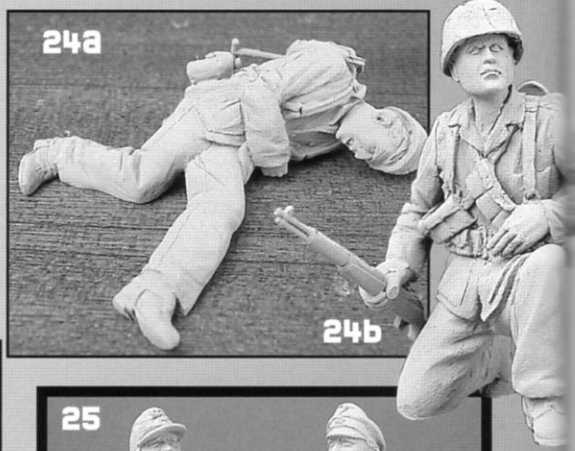
1908, Soviet Tanktroops WWII (21), is certainly the most exceptional of the group. This set depicts two tankers ready for the kind of cold only Mother Russia can deliver. The first figure is dressed in the heavy padded winter double-breasted tanker's coverall. This is bloused into his leather jackboots. He also wears the "Sam Browne" belt combination for his pistol. He's topped with the 1940 pattern Shapkaushanka flapped fleece cap and appears to be sharing a joke with his buddy.

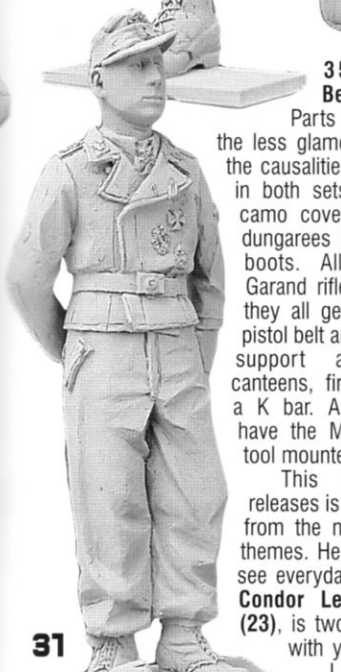
The second figure is sculpted wearing the heavy weight Polaschubuk (sheep skin coat) with trousers and jackboots, the coat being cinched with a single belt. His headgear is the black canvas tanker's helmet.

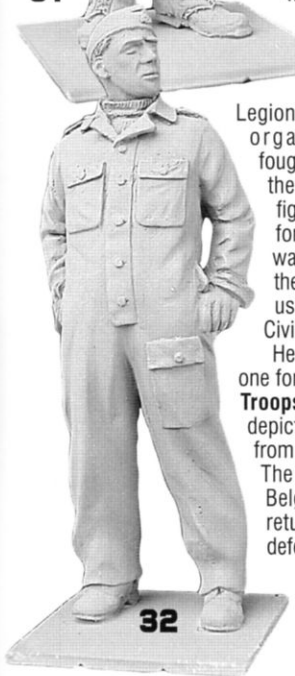
Outstanding!

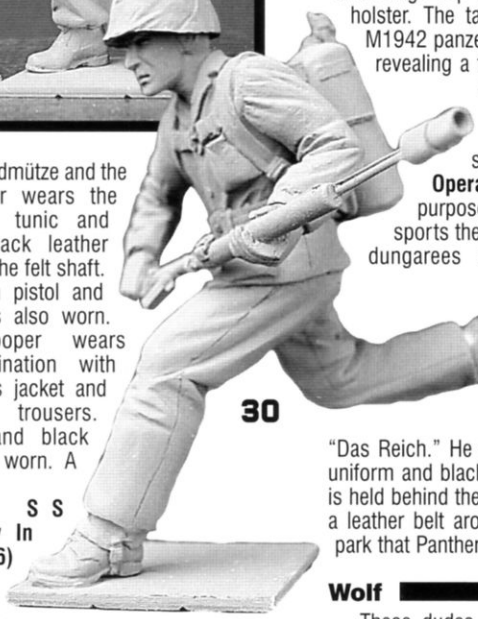
Warriors

Warriors marches on with its marvelous series of WW2 Marines. The latest are **35477 "Hit the Beach" Pt.5 (22)** and









35480 "Hit the Beach" Pt.6 (24). Parts 5 and 6 illustrate the less glamorous side of war, the causalities. All four Marines in both sets have on helmet camo covers and two piece dungarees and brown leather boots. All carry the M1 Garand rifle. Like the others, they all get the 1936 model pistol belt and suspenders that support ammo pouches, canteens, first aid pouch and a K bar. All the field packs have the M1910 entrenching tool mounted.

This latest round of releases is definitely deviating from the normal resin figure themes. Here's one you don't see everyday, **35478 Spanish Condor Legion Tank Crew (23)**, is two cats to go along with your Tristar Panzer I. These two figures represent members of the Condor Legion, a "volunteer" organization that fought on the side of the Fascists. Both figures would make for a very interesting way to display any of the German equipment used in the Spanish Civil war.

Here's another unique one for ya, **35481 SS Elite Troops, Budapest (25)** depicts a scene taken from an SS newsreel. The newsreel shows Belgian SS volunteers returning from the defense of Budapest in 1945. And an interesting pair they are! The trooper with the feldmütze and the wacky facial hair wears the reversible winter tunic and trousers, and black leather winter boots with the felt shaft. A pistol belt with pistol and MP40 pouches is also worn. The other trooper wears a winter combination with a Luftwaffe pilot's jacket and winter reversible trousers. The field cap and black leather boots are worn. A very cool combo.

35482, SS Motorcycle Crew In Winter Dress (26) provides a highly unique way to display your next BMW and sidecar model. It's a two-figure set wonderfully animated and with a "just arrived" flavor to it. The rider wears a sheep skin jacket lined with fleece and a toque is worn under his helmet. His trousers and gauntlet-style mittens are of the reversible camo type. The driver wears a greatcoat with Balaklava worn under his helmet and he also wears the heavy mittens (hey man, it's cold on a bike in the winter!). Both wear black leather boots.

More Russians baby! **35483, Russian Tank Crew-Winter (27)** is a three-tanker set with two standing crewmen wearing the Shuba (sheep skin coat). Interestingly, one is sculpted with it opened revealing the great coat underneath. The driver, who's cleverly sculpted sitting backward in the hatch of a T-34, wears just a great coat. All three wear the black canvas tanker's helmet, trousers and high boots.

35484, U.S. Para with M.G. (28), strikes a "Band of Brothers" theme with a trooper humping the business end of a .30 cal. He's wearing the M1942 jumper's blouse and trousers with Corcoran jump boots. His M1936 pistol belt has the M1910 canteen, fighting knife, M1911 .45 cal pistol, M1912 holster, M1918 double pouch magazine pocket and M1942 aid pouch. The weapon is the Browning M1919 30 cal light MG and he is also taking on a can of ammo.

35488, SS Tankers (29) gives us another pair of versatile panzer weenies. The tanker holding the wrench wears the SS pattern black panzer uniform and forage cap with a black leather belt with pistol holster. The tanker with the gas can wears the M1942 panzer work uniform with an open jacket revealing a turtleneck sweater underneath. The M1943 field cap tops him off.

The Marines are everywhere man! One more for the continuing series. **35493, USMC Flamethrower Operator (30)** is charging forward with a purpose. Like the others in the series, he sports the helmet with camo cover, two piece dungarees and brown leather boots. The flamethrower is the model M1A1. Anybody got a light?

35497, Ernst Barkman-Panzer Ace (31), represents the likeness of SS Obercharfuhrer Ernst Barkmann of SS Pz.Div. "Das Reich." He wears the SS pattern black panzer uniform and black M1943 field cap. A pair of gloves is held behind the back in his left hand and he wears a leather belt around the waist. Now, where did he park that Panther?

Wolf

These dudes seem to be specializing in single piece castings. If you are looking for figures with a minimal fuss, look no further than the Wolf range. **WAW41, German SS Tankman in one-piece camouflage overall, late WW2 (32)**, is a long title for a short figure. This tanker wears the one-piece camouflage overall, worn over a sweater and forage cap. Other than that, he's just kinda hanging out.

WAW42, Cold German soldier in SS parka, hood raised (33) is a rather cold looking trooper wearing the field gray anorak with the hood pulled over his helmet. The matching winter trousers are worn unbloused over the boots. With his arms crossed and his neck tucked in, the pose really communicates cold!

WAW43, WW2 German in Panzer style uniform fastening jacket (34) is yet another beautifully simple pose. The uniform could be the M1940 field gray, black special uniform or camouflage version as shown on the box top. This is worn with a sweater underneath.

Another great round from Wolf!

The various manufacturers submit all figures reviewed in Mini-Men. The exceptions this time are Corpus (ww2modelmaker.com), Mirage and Resination (Squadron Mail Order), Modeling Artisan Mori (Mission Models) and VP (Historex Agents). Thank you!

OKINAWA '45

LVT(A)4 CONVERSION

Improving and enhancing the Italeri kit with new update sets from Trakz

Part four

The LVT(A)4 Amtank was a direct descendant of the earlier LVT(2) Amtracs. Production of the new "Amtank" vehicles began in 1944. The LVT(A)4 came about from the US Marines' request for increased turret firepower from the earlier LVT(A)1's high velocity 37mm weapon (mounted in a M5 type turret). The result was the mounting of an M8 "Stuart" type turret that housed a 75mm Howitzer. The prototype of the LVT(A)4 involved mounting the new M8 turret onto an LVT(A)1. A series of modifications were necessary to integrate these new vehicles into the production line. The larger turret ring of the M8 turret made it necessary to extend the top sides of the upper hull turret deck plate several inches beyond the LVT(A)1's design. The two exposed stern machine gun positions of the LVT(A)1 were deleted and this area was now used to extend the LVT(A)4's larger upper hull piece.

The LVT(A)4 was first used in the Marianas campaign during the invasion of Guam, Tinian and Saipan. The US Marines used 535 of the vehicles to equip three Amtank battalions while the US Army equipped seven Amtank battalions with the 1,300 LVT(A)4s they were issued.

The basic Italeri kit

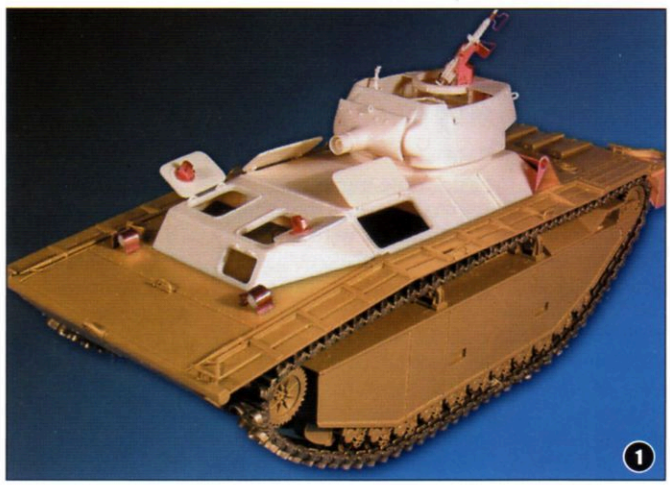
As I write this article, Italeri has announced that they will be releasing a kit of an LVT(A)5 Amtank in the future. According to their own released photos and information, the Italeri kit will be a post war variant of the Amtank, but with a little work, the modeler could easily backdate the new Italeri kit to a WWII version. Over the past two years I have made repeated e-mails to Italeri to find out more details and get firm release date information, as their original release date was December of 2002. I even delayed the release of my *"Project: LVT"* book series in hopes of including the Italeri kit in them. Unfortunately, the people at Italeri have not responded to any of my e-mails. Several phone calls to their American importer/distributor, Testors, have not netted any useful information either.

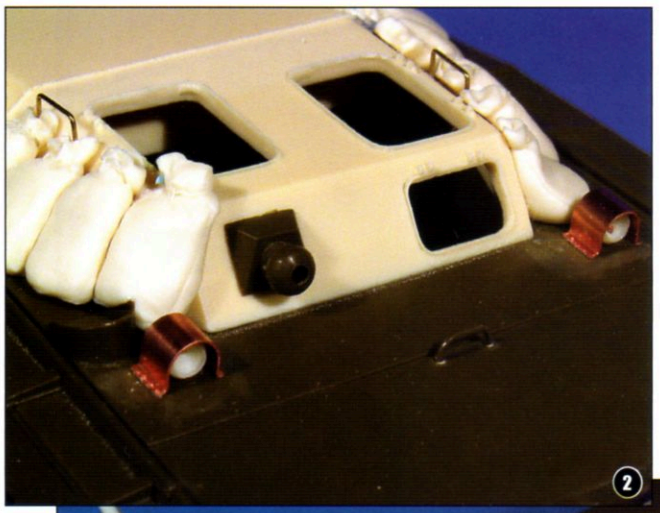
So, the basis for this Trakz LVT(A)4 conversion is the Italeri 1/35 scale model of an LVT(A)1 "Alligator" (kit # 6384). Overall, the basic components of the Italeri kit are quite useable. The lower hull, upper hull, suspension and tracks are all used with little, if any, modification **(photo 1).** Some of the areas of the Italeri kit that do need a little attention are the water deflection boxes at the stern of the kit, the headlights and their guards, tow cable mounting brackets and some hatch detail. Fortunately, all of these shortcomings are addressed in the Trakz conversion kit.

The Trakz conversion

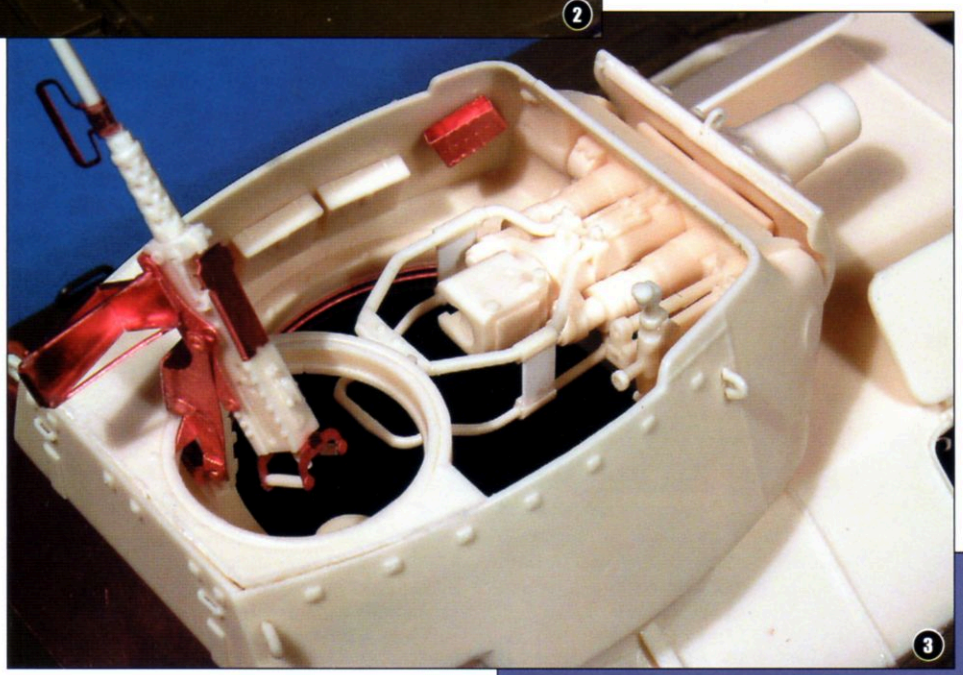
Using the well-illustrated instruction sheet as a guide, our first task is to build the late style longer water deflectors. Just take your time and test fit the pieces before gluing. These parts are handed, so make sure you do not confuse the similar pieces. One of the corrections that needs to be made to the Trakz headlights is they need to be shortened and the etch light guards also need to be altered to fit the shortened headlights **(photo 2).**

I carefully removed the Italeri tow cable brackets for the rear of the hull and replaced them with the Trakz etched parts. I think that the Trakz tow cable brackets are actually about twice as wide as they should be, so before bending the parts to shape, I took a pair of scissors and cut them in half. This is easy to correct and you actually end up with two complete sets of the brackets. Now we turn our attention to the large resin upper hull deck piece that makes up the bulk of the Trakz kit. It is used in place of the Italeri kit part #40. The new resin replacement part is hollow cast and all of the hatches are separate so you can model them open or closed as you please. I detailed up the hull piece and hatches with wire for grab handles, per the Trakz instructions. The fit of the Trakz upper hull piece was a little sloppy, it appeared to have shrunk a little bit too much and left a very small gap on both the left and right sides of the piece. This gap is easily filled with plastic strip and a bit of putty.





armor from a sheet of .10 plastic. Unlike other LVT's that had removable armor kits, this LVT(A)4's armor was welded in place, so it has no mounting bracket detail. I also fitted the Italeri late version .30 caliber front hull MG to the Trakz resin upper hull. The Trakz piece has been pre-marked for this piece, as it is cast with a very thin membrane at this position that you can punch out and clean up with an x-acto knife. I added the hatch periscope and handle details to the open hatches and the bilge pump exit pipe on the left side pontoon top.



The M8 style turret is our next project. Using resin and photo etch parts, the turret builds up into a nicely detailed model in itself **(photo 3)**. The addition of the etched turret ring detail part is a real nice touch. The turret traverse and elevation controls are well represented, as well as the gun sighting equipment. Many interior details are included in the rather comprehensive photo etch sheet, or in finely cast resin parts. Some of these parts are given in both etch and resin, so you can choose which you prefer.

For the Trakz kit box top and this article, I built the photo etch and resin .50 cal machine gun and its cradle. Since I chose to model a late production vehicle that did not have the turret mounted .50 caliber, nor did it have the partial turret roof located on the rear half of the turret top, I simply placed them on the model for the photos.

Other changes

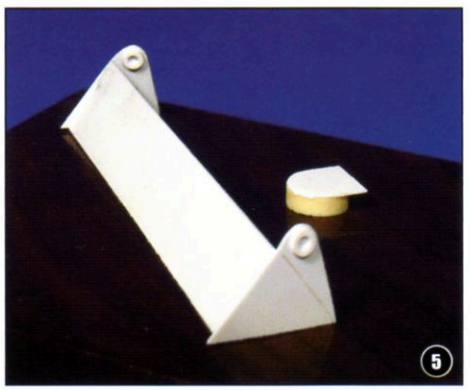
Since I chose to model a late war version of the LVT(A)4 as it appeared on Okinawa in the spring of 1945, a few other modifications were necessary. Trakz has also released a set of photo etch add on armor to spice up your LVT model. I bought a set of this armor in order to use it as a template and I made the armor from sheet plastic. By the time of the Okinawa invasion, most LVT(A)4's had one or more of these additional armor plates installed **(photo 4)**. Using photos for reference, I noticed that the most common added on armor was on the front hull bow and side pontoons. I made the hull

While I think it is widely known that I am no fan of photo etch parts, if they are your only choice or if they really do enhance the model then I do use them. This was not the case with the upper hull rear plate and side lifting plates pieces in the Trakz kit. I found them awkward and just too darn thin and flimsy. I spent about 30 minutes scratch building new ones from sheet plastic and I got a chance to use my new punch and die set. Since I plan on building many more versions of the LVT(A)4, I made a mold of my master part and cast up a bunch of them. Another part that I had to make for my model was the late style periscope covers.

A piece of resin scrap was turned on a Dremel to the appropriate size and a small piece of plastic sheet completed the details. In about 20 minutes I had made one of the covers. I also molded up and cast the needed second part **(photo 5)**.

The sandbags used on this model are sold separately as a Trakz product (TX 0024). They are tailor made for this kit and really add a different dimension to the vehicle **(photo 6)**.

I have built several of these LVT based kits and one problem with every one of them has been a fit problem that leaves the gap where the front upper and lower hull are supposed to meet. It can quickly be fixed with some strip plastic and putty or by using the bow armor plate. One important tip is to install the tracks on the vehicle before you glue the upper hull to the lower hull. Otherwise it is real difficult to get the tracks mounted. The other tip is that the drive sprocket mount is real weak, I have had to drill out the drive sprockets and super glue them to a metal rod axle on every Italeri LVT based kit that I have built.



Painting & markings

The subject of my model being an LVT(A)4 on Okinawa in 1945 meant that it would be painted in an overall green color, instead of the earlier blue/gray color used on all LVT's up until 1944. Determining the exact shade of colors used on tanks in WWII is a real crap shoot. In some instances I have been able to obtain actual paint chips right off of vehicles being restored today. I

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show color charts to veterans and get their input on the colors as best as they can remember them. But all this enables you to do is to get a ball park idea of the colors in question.

The point here is that if you research the actual colors used by any Army on their tanks in WWII, and you carefully mix the exact shades taking scale effect into consideration and paint this color on your model, it will look fine as a factory fresh representation of the vehicle. If, however, you wish to model the vehicle a few years or months after leaving the factory, it's a whole different story.

I came across some color motion picture film of LVT's on Okinawa which showed the colors of my LVT(A)4 in great detail. This color being a very dark green coated with liberal amounts of dust and dirt. I always base coat my models with Tamiya acrylics and then weather with oil paint and Humbrol enamel washes **(photo 7)**. I decided to use Tamiya XF-62 olive drab for the green base coat. My favorite part of modeling is the painting and weathering process and I really get into it. I will apply thin washes of colors to get desired effects that are not readily apparent to the naked eye **(photo 8)**. On this vehicle I used a Mars Orange oil paint to represent the different rusted metal look and applied Humbrol Khaki Drill and Humbrol 148 (a flesh color) washes over the dried Mars Orange wash. I repeated these washes one over the other until I achieved the desired effect. A Prisma Color PC949 "Metallic Silver" colored pencil was used to apply wear marks and scratches to the vehicle's surfaces. Using the colored pencil requires a real light hand, keeping in mind the tiny scale and random pattern that the scratches need to be to look convincing. You can really ruin a model if you don't develop this technique fully.

Weathering powders have been around for a long time. Used by model railroad builders for nearly 50 years, they have finally begun to find an audience among armor modelers.

I have a set of weathering powders (pastels or pigments, whatever you want to call them) that I had bought as a close out item at a local hobby shop (OK, OK, yes it was CRM Hobbies!). This set features 12 different colors ranging from an off white to a coal black. One interesting detail that I wanted to include on my model was the mud and dirt run off that is apparent on the sides of the vehicles in so many photos of LVT's in WWII. I chose to use a light brown/tan color powder, applied by hand to a small area of the model that I had freshly washed with paint thinner **(photo 9)**. As soon as the dry powder came into contact with the wet surface it turned into thick mud. I let this dry and then lightly streaked the area with a #2 sable brush soaking with paint thinner. This technique accomplished two things; first it gave the mud the necessary streaked mud effect, second it made a fresh stain that when dry gave a more random appearance to the effect. I kept repeating this procedure until I had the desired results. By varying the amount of thinner, powder, time between applications or the brush used, you can really achieve some outstanding results.

The markings on this vehicle were all done using the new Trakz vinyl masks. I did the research and artwork for the Trakz product and in my opinion, the vinyl masks are really the way to go whenever possible. Some markings are too small or too delicate to be replicated in the vinyl mask method. Dry transfer is the next best medium for anything that can't be done in vinyl. With the vinyl mask method, you are free to paint the markings in any color and with care, they are reusable. And, you get both the negative mask and positive template on the same sheet.

Final thoughts and shameless plugs

This fourth article completes my building of the Trakz LVT kits that have been released to date. In all, I am quite happy with the Trakz LVT related products, and being as they are the only ones coming up with kits of these original subjects, I'm really grateful. If you enjoyed these edited articles and would like to buy a copy of the books that these are excerpted from, please contact the VLS Corp. or visit www.modelmecca.com

—Dave Harper with assistance by Steve Hoard

MMiR RECCE

Italeri LVTA1 Amtank. Kit number 6384. Suggested retail price $35.00.
Trakz LVT(A)4 Conversion Set. Kit number TX0006. Suggested retail price $46.95. Both kits graciously provided for review by the VLS Corp.

Here is a list of the current and upcoming LVT books.
LP 008, Project LVT's: Amtanks. LP 009, Project LVT's: Amtracs
Also available from VLS are two great reference books on the LVT's. LP 010, *The LVT2 & LVT(A)2* and LP 011, *The LVT(A)1 & LVT(A)4*. Both are black & white photo books that feature details from the actual vehicle Tech Manuals. LP 012 is a set 1/35 scale plans for the LVT(A)1, LVT2, LVT(A)2, and LVT(A)4.

THE MODEL CITIZEN

Reviewing P&J Design's 1/12 Waffen-SS Grenadier and painting the SS Eichenlaubmuster pattern

Also known as "Oak Leaf Type A," this pattern was launched in 1941 and is the only SS pattern to enjoy continued production alongside SS Erbsenmuster (dot pattern) after March 1944. It was extremely popular and featured a summer pattern reversible to autumn, and was used on smocks, second model helmet covers, two-piece drill uniform for tank crews, camouflaged combination overalls for tank crews, reversible winter parka and trousers and Zeltbahn ponchos. A similar pattern, Oak Leaf B, featured a watery ring outside the camouflage.

And what better figure to present this pattern than the new 1/12 Waffen-SS Grenadier from P&J Design, sculpted by H.C. Lau. There are two major flaws with this figure. First, you will spend an inordinate amount of time fondling the parts, drooling, and muttering "How'd they do that?" Second, you're going to quickly lose interest in a lot of resin figures you have waiting in the wings. Quite frankly, I consider this to be the most perfect scale figure ever produced, and I don't say that lightly. Even if Germans aren't your thing, you should get one of these so you can see just how far the bar has been raised. Perfect sculpting, perfect casting; so the result has all the appeal of the coolest action figures but in a medium you can paint. The figure is comprised of 27 parts, plus the base all cast in gray resin, and the undercuts, relief, and total accuracy are mind-boggling. So, I'll try to go easy on the superlatives and take this step-by-step. It's worth mentioning, however, that I painted each component of this figure as a separate model, then assembled the figure.

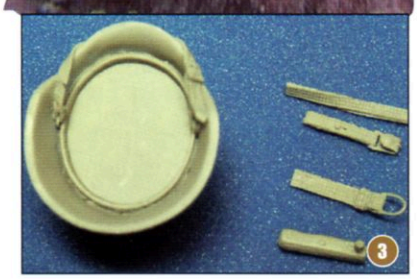
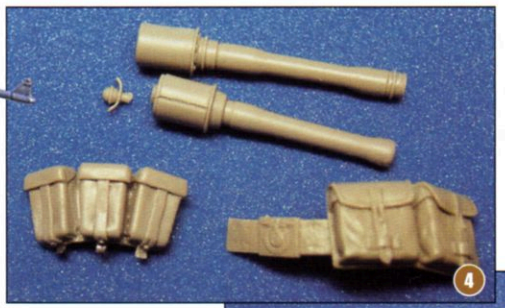
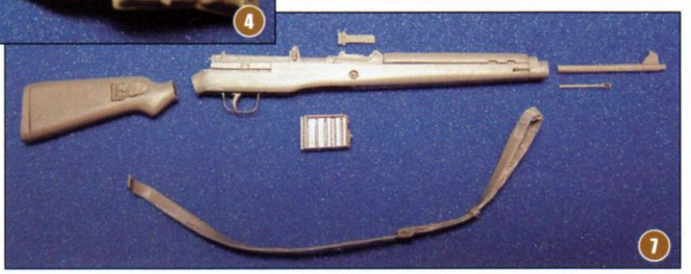


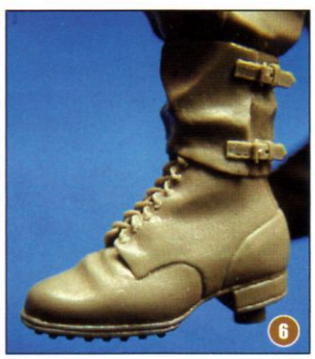
Photo 1. *The head resting in place for this photo. The torso and arms are a single piece casting. Note the canvas webbing of the late pattern tropical harness; the spring clip for his Nahkampfmesser combat knife; Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon; collar hook on the tunic; and Totenkopf Division collar insignia in lieu of SS runes. The twin stripes on his left collar insignia identify his rank as SS-Sturmann (Lance Corporal).* ***Photo 2.*** *Rear view of the torso and its details. Please compose yourself.* ***Photo 3.*** *The steel helmet features the sweatband and a complete chin strap. Also shown are two gas canister straps, the left front D-ring, and the haft of the knife.* ***Photo 4.*** *Two complete stick grenades to be tucked behind the belt: a Steilhandgranate 39, and a StiGr43 with separate igniter pull set. The belt with SS-pattern buckle is attached to Gewehr 43 cartridge pouches, and the Kar98k pouches are separate. This allows the grenades to be tucked in behind the belt with a realistic gap. Note the tails of the straps on the ammo pouches—aaaaah.....* ***Photo 5.*** *Our man's lower half—a one-piece casting. His trousers (keilhose) feature tapered ankles and the reinforced butt panel, introduced in July 1942.* ***Photo 6.*** *Canvas leggings first appeared in August 1940, intended for rear area troops. The Waffen-SS adopted ankle boots, and thus the leggings, in July 1942. Note the eyelets, straps, and hobnails. Heaven, I'm in heaven...* ***Photo 7.*** *The canteen, mess kit, and bread bag are separate units and are shown together here – perfect casting and thus a perfect fit. The handle on the mess kit was created from wire. The mess kit, canteen, shovel, and gas mask canister are all sculpted a full 360.* ***Photo 8.*** *The Gewehr 43, cast in seven parts. There just aren't enough words.*

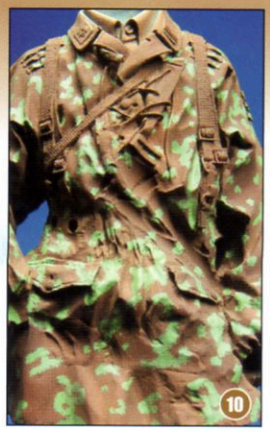


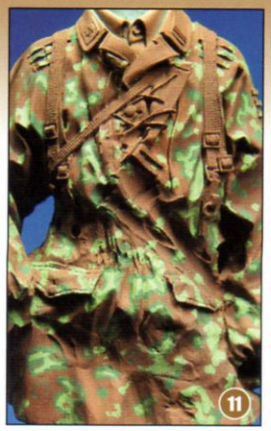


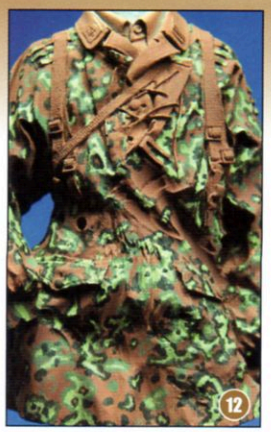
Painting the Eichenlaubmuster Pattern

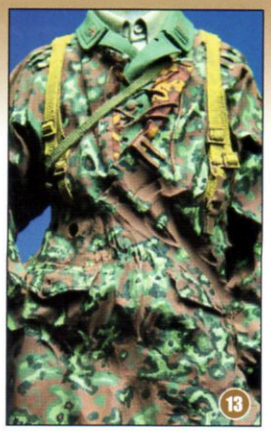
Photo 9. *The P&J grenadier is wearing the third of four German smock styles—the M-42 Type I. It is distinguished by its two horizontal pockets below the waist. Here the wearer has tucked the cuffs inside the elastic wristbands. All parts were first sprayed with Tamiya White Primer. The smock was then airbrushed with Tamiya acrylic Flat Earth XF-52.* ***Photo 10.*** *There are ample references on this popular pattern (see Model Citizen MMiR Recce in issue 32). The next color to go on was a minty olive green; I found a suitable color with Delta Creamcoat acrylic craft paint, in the color Eucalyptus. Note the pattern change on the pocket flaps, camouflage loops, and forearms, where different pieces of cloth were used. The hem at the bottom does not constitute a change in material.* ***Photo 11.*** *Next, many of the green fields and dots were ringed with Andrea #1 Field Gray acrylic. This darker shade does not ring all of the first color greens. It also appears in large sporadic dots.* ***Photo 12.*** *Black-Green is the next color to be applied, and here I used Americana Black Green acrylic craft paint. This color, like the third, rings some but not all of the first fields and dots. Note the colors also applied inside the first fields, and the black green dots on their own.* ***Photo 13.*** *With the smock colors finished, other torso details were then painted with Andrea acrylics. These items include the undershirt and tunic, canvas harness, and gas canister strap.* ***Photo 14.*** *Thinned artist oil washes were*



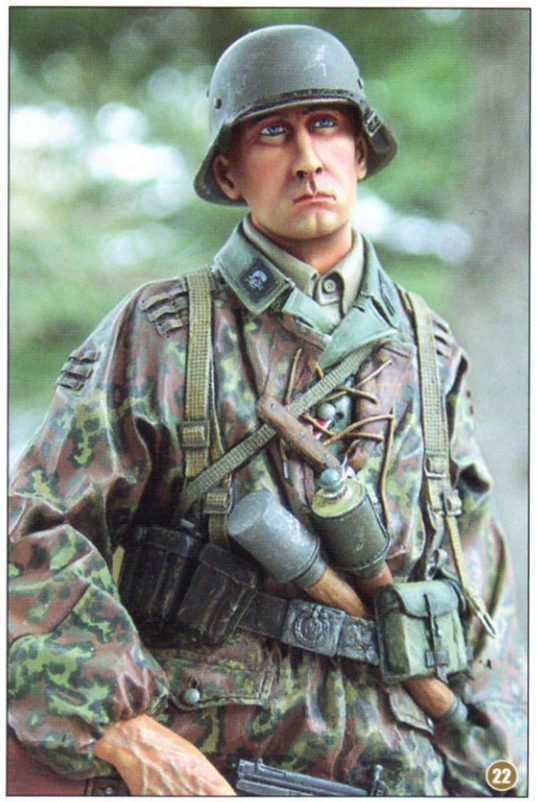


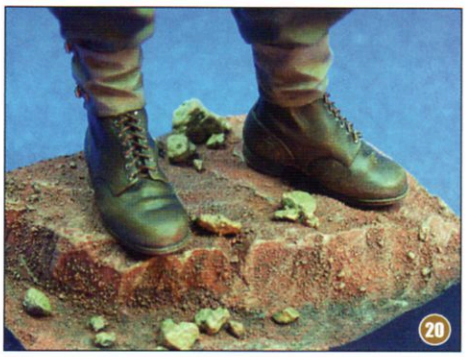






applied next. The smock received a wash of Raw Umber/Mars Brown, and the tunic received a wash of Raw Umber/Green Umber. The cloth straps were treated likewise. ***Photo 15.*** *The items were then drybrushed using light shades of artist oils. Undercuts and recesses were darkened with the wash colors, and the finer details, such as buttons, hooks, buckles, and insignia, were painted last.* ***Photo 16.*** *If you've never met Pat Stansell, he looks something like this. Flesh tones on the head and hands were painted with artist oils.* ***Photo 17.*** *The completed Gewehr 43. The stock joins inside the grenadier's right hand, giving him a full grip around the wood. Stunning. The sling was attached after the rifle was in place.* ***Photo 18.*** *The completed spaten in its leather carrier.* ***Photo 19.*** *Fitting the two halves of the rifle into the right hand ensures proper positioning. With his finger lightly resting on the trigger, the left hand can then be positioned, and the entire assembly glued together. The sling went on last. The wound on his right hand was my addition.* ***Photo 20.*** *The finished boots and leggings, with the figure standing on the stock base. I opted for field gray trousers, though this style also appeared in the dot pattern camouflage drill.* ***Photo 21.*** *The field equipment in place. Each piece fits precisely into position. Note the gas canister strap that extends from the buckle down to the canister itself. Unbelievable casting on the Kochgeschirr 31 includes the leather strap. The strap mates perfectly with the D-ring on the bread bag.* ***Photo 22:*** *Note the strap with D-ring hanging over the Gewehr 43 cartridge pouches, as well as the hooked strap dangling from the gas mask canister (lead photo). This strap would have been hooked onto the rear of the belt to draw the canister into a horizontal position. If you're not a fan of the Totenkopf Division, it would not be difficult to scrape off the death's head and replace it with SS runes. By studying each part and its position, there's really no question how he goes together. The grenades should be glued in place before the belt and cartridge pouches are attached.*





Conclusion

Friends and neighbors, it just doesn't get any better than this. We can only hope they'll continue this series.

—Joe Porter

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P&J Design Waffen-SS Grenadier. Item number TS-P002. Graciously provided by RZM Imports, exclusive U.S. importer/distributor. Suggested retail $89.95, and worth every penny.

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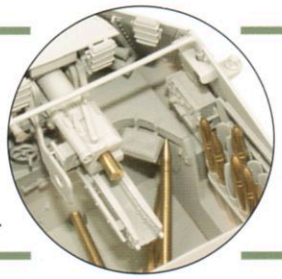

35248 Marder III

35203 Ger. Jagdpanther Late Version

35200 "Wespe" Self Propelled Howitzer

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